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# HUNGARY

## LAND OF CONTRASTS

*By the Author*

COME WITH ME THROUGH BUDAPEST

FLAGS (with an account of the Hungarian tricolor,  
"The Story of St. Stephen")

HEROES OF LIBERTY (with a chapter on Rákóczi,  
"The Prince Who Fought for the People")

ILLINOIS, THE STORY OF THE PRAIRIE STATE

WOMEN IN AMERICAN HISTORY

COME WITH ME THROUGH KRAKOW

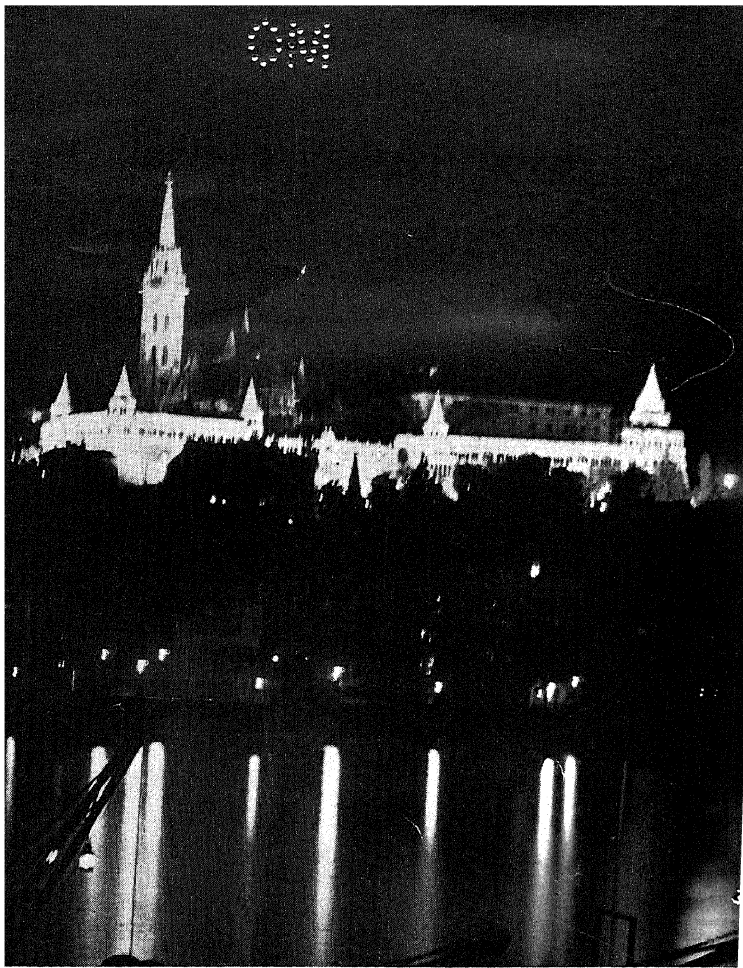
COME WITH ME THROUGH WARSAW

PILSUDSKI, BUILDER OF POLAND

POLAND THE UNEXPLORED

POLAND TODAY





BUDAPEST AT NIGHT. THE FLOOD LIGHTS ON  
THE CORONATION CHURCH AND THE FISHERMEN'S BAS-  
TION ARE REFLECTED IN THE VELVET WATER OF THE DANUBE

7

# HUNGARY

## LAND OF CONTRASTS

by

GRACE HUMPHREY

SCOTT AND MORE  
489 Fifth Avenue, New York  
1936

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*To Eve*

*who couldn't go with me*





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## I.

## I'M GOING TO HUNGARY!

"I'm sorry, but I can't serve on your committee."

"Why not, pray? You're not a slacker at the club—generally."

"I'm sailing in two weeks."

"Where are you off to now?" came a chorus of voices.

"To Hungary."

"You say that as calmly," exclaimed Louise, "as if you were crossing over to Brooklyn or taking a train to Washington. But Hungary—"

"Of all places! Why Hungary? Anything to see there?"

"Do you know anybody there?" Ruth demanded.

I shook my head.

"Tell us now, why are you going?"

"Well," I began, only to stop helplessly. How put it all into words—the lure of Hungary, my desire to explore a country little known and see for myself the land and the people?

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"But what in the world ever gave you that idea?" Kathryn insisted.

"The crown of St. Stephen," I began, then paused to laugh at their puzzled faces. "Yes, I think the crown began it," and I explained how I grew interested when I was writing *FLAGS* and the Hungarian chapter gave me more trouble than any other, how I went to a Hungarian newspaper editor and a priest asking about that complicated tricolor, and finally in despair wrote to the Legation in Washington; part of the answer was a call from a most delightful Hungarian who translated just the information I needed and then suddenly asked, "Why don't you go to Hungary? It's virgin soil for writers. And I'd be glad to give you letters of introduction."

"Virgin soil—in this decade?" scoffed Louise. "There must be plenty of books on Hungary."

"I've exhausted the Public Library and I found—a few histories, not one very readable in the new way of writing history and none of them up to date; one travel book—1908; here and there a chapter; oh, yes, propaganda pamphlets after the War."

"What about a Blue Guide?"

"There isn't any. I got a map and a booklet on Budapest from the Hungarian Travel Bureau."

"Do you mean to say you're starting off with no more than that?"

"Plus these," and I took up a pile of letters from the

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desk. "True, I don't know a soul in Hungary, but I hope these'll prove an open sesame. My introductions aren't all official, they're to all sorts and conditions of men, as far as I can guess from the envelopes."

"Let's see them," begged Kathryn. "A university professor, a newspaper editor, two countesses and a baron, one excellency, four plain madames, the Secretary of State in—well, in some ministry, Princess—can't pronounce that possibly! Budapest, Szeged, Eger, Sopron, Debrecen, Cegled. They're varied enough to give you a cross-section of life in Hungary. All together, they look rather impressive. Where'd you get them, you lucky woman?"

"The official ones came from the Minister at Washington and the Consulates here and in Cleveland, and some from the Hungarian-American Society where I asked about the weather and what clothes to take, as well as something to read. The others—well, I made a regular business of asking, whenever there was one chance in a hundred that a friend's friend knew somebody in Hungary. Often I got nothing for my pains, but I myself was surprised to see how often my scheme succeeded. I asked one day at the club, 'Does any one know people in Hungary?' and two members whom I scarcely knew came up to me later; one recommended a hotel and a *pension* in Budapest and assured me I'd find plenty of people speaking German and French, if not English; the



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other promised a note to an old friend, a fellow art student in Munich before the War."

"How long are you going to stay?"

"Six days or seven weeks or eight months. It doesn't depend on me, but on the Hungarians and on Hungary."

"So you're off to see the blue Danube—Budapest is on the Danube, isn't it?" Edith asked vaguely, "and to eat goulash and paprika and hear gipsy music. Maybe you'll do all three at once, in some cafe by the river. Oh, I do envy you so—"

"I don't," Ruth interrupted rather sharply, "the music—yes, but not your meals and certainly not the hotels you'll find in Hungary. Budapest and one or two large towns may be all right, but—what'll you do in a little place when you don't know the language?"

"Trust to luck," I answered boldly. "I can get as far as Budapest and cross the bridge later on."

However I confess now that I did have some misgivings when I stopped to think that I was starting off all alone, for a far land, with thirty letters and naught besides. I studied the map and estimated how long the journey would be to Vienna or Venice or Krakow or Prague, and assured myself that if I didn't like it I didn't have to stay.

How could I possibly foresee all the experiences, the happy adventures I was to have in Hungary? How

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could I know that I would stay not eight months, but more than twice that long? that I'd form many friendships so that leaving would be a dreadful wrench? that I'd be fortunate enough to be on the ground for unusual events?

What delightful happenings came my way! I was a guest at a private concert where Hubay played a violin concerto. I went often to the Philharmonic, for Dohnanyi was conducting all that winter. I saw a harvest festival on a big estate. I was staying at one country house when the village near by had its annual fair, to which we all went merrily and watched the peasants dancing and bought Hungarian sweets and gay little gifts—mine were a peasant child's doll and a big cooky, shaped like a horse, with his equipment made of colored paper, pasted on.

I had tea with the foremost novelist of Hungary. I met a famous playwright and the president of the League of Women Writers and a veteran in the long struggle for women's rights. I was in Budapest for the fiftieth birthday of the composer, Kodaly, and heard two of his operas given at a gala performance in the royal opera house. During my months in Hungary the Boy Scouts of all the world assembled there for their Jamboree, the last of its kind, and I went to the opening with the head of the Girl Scouts and sat directly behind the Regent and Baden-Powell for the "march past." The interna-

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tional competition on the fiftieth anniversary of the death of Liszt was held during a fortnight in the late spring. I witnessed the moving funeral rites of Count Apponyi, "the grand old man of Hungary," not long after I'd seen him at the opera and in Parliament.

I was among those present at what some of my friends called "the king's birthday supper." A very simple meal it was, the tickets costing about forty cents, so that no one need stay away because he couldn't afford it. Eight hundred persons gathered to celebrate the birthday of—how does one name him?—of young Otto Habsburg, the son of the last king of Hungary. I couldn't understand the speeches, but it was interesting to see the people—priests, retired generals with rows of medals, nuns in severe gray dress, army officers, women in elaborate evening clothes and in simple afternoon frocks.

I went to a fashionable wedding in the chapel of the royal palace, where though I knew neither bride nor groom, I had an aisle seat and a fine view of the wedding party. The bridesmaids might have come from America, with their pretty frocks of plain-colored organdy; but the men! More than the bride they held my eyes, for the whole eleven of them were in gala costume—velvet and satin and fur and jewels!

I talked with an ex-officer who was Hungary's representative on the international commission that fixed one

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of the boundaries after the War; and with the general in command when the Sopron plebiscite was taken; and with three Hungarians who'd been imprisoned by the Bolshevists, so that I heard, first-hand, about events almost contemporary—history in the making.

Then, as if to make the contrast the sharper, I went to an isolated country church, with the man who discovered and uncovered there a series of frescoes of the life of St. Anthony, done by Master Z. He explained his special process of removing whitewash and layers of paint without disturbing the colors underneath, and how he reached an approximate date—late thirteenth century.

I went to a medieval fortress, now the largest one left in Europe with "casemates" which made mining impossible. Not till I walked through those dim, underground passages could I understand how two thousand men and fourteen women could hold out for five weeks against a hundred thousand besiegers who retreated, exhausted, saying that the "sheepfold," as they'd nicknamed the Eger fortress, was invincible by the will of Allah. As fascinating as the military part were the ruins of the cathedral within the fortress walls, and fragments of three earlier churches built on this site—pillars and frescoes and masons' signs from the eleventh century!

Often it was the unexpected adventure that made half the fun in Hungary. Some Budapest acquaintances in-

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vited me to go with them for two days in Szeged, to see the university and the Hungarian Hall of Fame. Just before train time a telephone message announced that some emergency would detain them, but I must go on as planned. Wondering, a little fearful, I was following my porter from the train at the Szeged station when a voice thundered out, from the crowd by the gate, "Are you Humphrey Grace?" I looked up, saw a man waving, and nodded.

"I am Dr. Wolf—but not a very savage wolf," he said as we shook hands. "I am at your service for Szeged. This way, please."

We crossed an empty waiting room, a guard sprang to unlock the door, and—I gasped. Drawn up at this special entrance was the carriage of the Lord Mayor—a victoria with two splendid, prancing bay horses; Hungarian horses, what more can I say? Their elaborate harness was trimmed with red and blue. The coachman wore red trousers, a light blue coat with much braiding, front and back, and looped cords of blue and red; high black boots; a black felt hat with a feather over the high crown and ribbons hanging down in the back. Though afterward I drove in other mayors' carriages, and once with four horses, that first experience was unforgettable.

Oh, there's no monotony in a Hungarian visit! I shared the venison brought back in triumph by a hunting party. Did you ever eat venison that had been

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soaked in wine and spices for four days? I went to the restaurants where middle-class unemployed get hot dinners, or bring buckets and baskets to carry it home. I went to schools—to a fashion show in a trade school, where each girl wore the frock or coat she had designed and made; to a crafts school where young people were weaving, working in metal and enamel, making jewelry and tapestry and rugs; to the nurses' training school in the Institute of Hygiene, which the Rockefeller Foundation gave to Hungary; I saw the monthly maps showing their amazing success in the campaign against diphtheria, and heard about the demonstration centers for public health work, and what they're doing to improve the water supply. But the most interesting school of all was a special one where half the girls came from the neighborhood, apprenticed to learn a trade, and the other half were on probation from the Juvenile Court; putting the two groups together has proved a great success.

Over and over and over, in Budapest, in small towns and villages, I went to the market. That's always a fascinating scene in Europe, but especially so in Hungary because of the wealth of fruits and vegetables that add their gay colors to the scene. Once I dined at a real *csárda* (country inn). I visited the Budapest barracks, put up for Russian prisoners in 1914, and since the War used for refugees and for the poorest of the poor.

How did I manage without knowing Hungarian? It's

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a drawback, of course, but I thought it far more important to learn Hungarians than to master their language. A foreigner can have a marvelous time in Hungary without knowing more than a few words of Hungarian, if he has plenty of contacts and those with the right people. It's surprising how many persons know English and speak it very well. As to French and German, it's a matter of course that people speak both. So I got along—generally well, at the worst somehow, with a score of Hungarian words, German, some French, gestures and a smile.

Sometimes when I asked my way on the street, the policeman would stop a passerby to answer my inquiry. One rainy night he actually told a man to go with me and show me where I must turn. At the opera, when once I happened to be alone, the group sitting next me were so distressed that they couldn't explain about Hunyadi László and his mother, that one of them went down the aisle, asking people if they could speak this or that, and came back with an officer who introduced himself with a courtly bow and said, how could he serve me? and did I want to know about the music or about the events at Vajdahunyad?

Did I really learn only a few words of Hungarian, and stayed so long? Yes, I confess it frankly, for that language is indeed a stumbling block. Not one word is related in any way to words I'd struggled to learn in

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other countries. Wise men say that some of the root words are like Finnish and others like Turkish—but that doesn't help an American one bit.

Many words are frightfully long—ten, twelve, fifteen letters. There are few prepositions; endings are tacked on to words already long. There are strange combinations of consonants. There are marks above letters, indicating a slight change of sound. The accent is on the first syllable, no matter how long a word may be.

If I found their names difficult at first, many Hungarians were greatly puzzled by mine and wouldn't even try to pronounce it. Before the first week was over, I found that they all had the same name for me, just as people did in Poland; but where there I was *Panna Amerykanka*, in Hungary I was *Angol hölgy*—the English lady. When I laughingly protested and said, "But I'm not English, I'm American," the answer was, "It's all the same!"

The real reason I found it easy to travel in Hungary is that Hungarians like foreigners and like them to come to Hungary. From lowest to highest, every person seems to think it's his special duty to help a visitor and to leave a pleasant impression. And what beautiful manners they all have! Children, servants, officers, shopkeepers, train men, policemen, princesses and barons all show to foreigners the maximum of courtesy.

"I kiss your hand," László used to say when he



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knocked at my door, "will you please come to the telephone?"

Pretty speeches have been made to me in this country and in that, but never such speeches as in Hungary. I used to wonder how the men could think them up and say them so casually, yet with apparently such sincerity. Shall I give an example?

A group of people were sitting in a cafe, including a Cabinet minister, a professor and his American wife. The minister began telling me about King Béla III who came within one of being chosen emperor of Byzantium.

"He wished to marry the widow of the Prince of Wales. The English king felt responsible for his daughter-in-law and sent to inquire what Béla's income was; and lo! it was more than his own or the Holy Roman Emperor's. So the marriage went through. And now," with absolutely no change in his tone, as if it were all a part of the tale of that twelfth century king, "there's been a second international marriage, but Dr. Kovacs has chosen better." And he bowed to the American lady.

"A typical Hungarian speech," she said to me afterward.

One morning we started very early for a motor trip. One of the men said he'd met some old friends the evening before and talked with them till after three. He hesitated for a word in English, I suggested it, he

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thanked me with a little bow and said, "I must apologize for my poor English. A hundred and twenty years ago at Oxford I spoke it very well and took down all the lectures in English. And now—"

"How old are you?" I laughed.

"Last night I was twenty. I felt seventy when they called me this morning. But now (again there was no change of tone), motoring with you I grow one year less with every kilometer—soon I shall be thirty!"

Seventeen months in Hungary. Seventeen months with Hungarians. With the exception of a few days, I lived all that time not in hotels, but in Hungarian households, eating their delicious food, sharing their pleasures and their joys—and sometimes their sorrows too. Yet that's all too short a time to study a country so full of contrasts.

## II.

## QUEEN OF THE DANUBE

The boat trip from Vienna to Budapest meant a long, lazy day, but it was splendidly timed, to arrive about nine in the evening. Even in June it was quite dark. Involuntary oh's and ah's went up from all the passengers when the steamer rounded one of the many bends in the Danube, for in the distance shone the lights of Budapest.

One bank of the river low and flat, the other hilly, rising abruptly from the water. Rows of lights marking a bridge. Then on the right I saw, in the glare of modern flood-lighting, what looked like a fairy castle. The gray stone walls glistened above the mass of shadowy trees, broken by turrets and arches, steps and a high tower.

Farther along, on the crest of the hill, was a long, a very long building, with only a few of its many windows lighted. At the end of the vista flood-lights showed up a long, low, white structure, high on a hill. Below, half way down to the water, a monument a man's figure

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holding high a cross, strikingly placed in front of a colonnade.

"The best of it all," I overheard an Englishman saying to his guests, "is that Budapest doesn't disappoint you. You've liked this first glimpse tonight. You'll like it tomorrow, I promise you."

But would I?

I'd heard so much of the beauty of Budapest, of its unrivalled situation, of its proud title, "queen of the Danube," that in spite of that traveler's assurance, I braced myself next morning for more or less disappointment. I started out alone, turned toward the river—and there I stayed for some hours, looking, looking.

"The half has not been told," I commented aloud. "Budapest deserves all that people say—and more! There's only one adjective that suits the great sweep of the Danube here—magnificent."

So far as I know, there's not another city in all the world that has made such use of its river frontage as has Budapest. The trade of seven countries goes up and down the busy Danube, and the city with its three miles of quays rightly calls itself a port. Steamers and fishing boats, freight barges pulled by tugs bring their manifold cargoes to the docks here, but the actual unloading is tidily concealed from the view of people on the promenades; the great platforms are dropped down one story, with underneath passages for wagons and trucks.

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The river bank is one of the great social centers of the city, particularly on the Pest side. The Corso, as that wide street is called, is closed to traffic, reserved for strollers and idlers in the many cafes that face it. Here are the big and fashionable hotels. Here are long rows of chairs where for four cents you may sit, listen to the band, and watch the people passing by—till you feel a bit chilly and stroll again.

The cafes are never empty here. People come for second breakfast about eleven, others for luncheon which is served for four hours, many more for afternoon tea, and then for supper, or for coffee and an ice late in the evening. Every one loiters on the Corso, for no one is in a hurry in Budapest. If a cool breeze comes up, the waiters bring small steamer rugs for their patrons.

My first week I walked by the Danube every morning, doing nothing more than going up and down, across a bridge and back again, looking, looking. Not that I knew what all the buildings were, those first days. It was fun to find out gradually—fort, royal palace, Coronation Church, the fishermen's bastion—that was the fairy palace I'd seen from the Vienna boat, a restored section of the old city walls that long ago was defended by the guild of fishermen. As I looked across to the hills of Buda, suddenly I felt like Napoleon in Egypt—"A thousand years of Hungarian history are looking down at you!" As long as I stayed in the city, I

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counted a day lost when I hadn't walked by the Danube.

If I had a tiny sense of disappointment, it was that the river isn't blue. In sunshine, at twilight, in rain and fog, winter and summer, I've seen it many colors—slate, inky black, gray-green, a dull gray-brown; but blue—never.

"Who told you it was blue?" Mária countered. "Not a Hungarian. Not a writer. A waltz composer in Vienna. But that's a bagatelle. It's beautiful enough to make up for any lack of blue, isn't it now?"

"Yes," I agreed, "and one of the reasons it's so beautiful is the bridges. They're different, as if each had a story. Two are railroad bridges, I know, but the others—"

"A story — of course. The first to be built, replacing a bridge of boats that served half the year, was the Lánchíd—chain bridge is the literal translation, for it's a suspension bridge hung on great chains. See how sturdy it is, with severe, straight lines. It was the project of Count Széchenyi, one of the real makers of Budapest, but it was built by a Scotch engineer, Adam Clark."

"So, that's why the square at the Buda end of the bridge is named Clark Adam tér. It sounds so strange when the bus conductor calls it out, after all the Hungarian names. But why is the surname put first?"

"It always is in Hungary, a custom that seems queer

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to foreigners. But to come back to the bridge, when it was opened everybody crossing had to pay toll—aristocrats and peasants alike—an unheard-of thing in 1849. Then farther up the river is the Margit bridge, built like a Y, so that it joins both Buda and Pest to the Island. The French engineer Eiffel planned it. But the others,” she turned her face downstream, “are the work of Hungarians.”

“The one with the single arch and the high towers is my favorite.”

“Mine too—that’s the Elizabeth bridge. Your Edison called it the most daring one-arched bridge in Europe. The best place to enjoy it, for it has a satisfying beauty, is to go on foot across one of the other bridges and then look and look at that one. Still farther down is the Francis Joseph, its lines harsher and not so lovely as the Elizabeth; the difference, some people say, between Francis Joseph and his beautiful wife.”

It’s not only the bridges that make a great impression on visitors to Budapest. There’s the Island too—Hungarians seldom say, Margaret Island. Long and narrow, it lies on the bosom of the Danube like a wonderful gleaming jewel. It’s one of the treasures of Budapest, unique among European cities. So beautiful, so quiet and peaceful, seemingly so far from the town.

It has delightful promenades lined with fine old trees; a hotel and sanatorium; half a dozen restaurants,



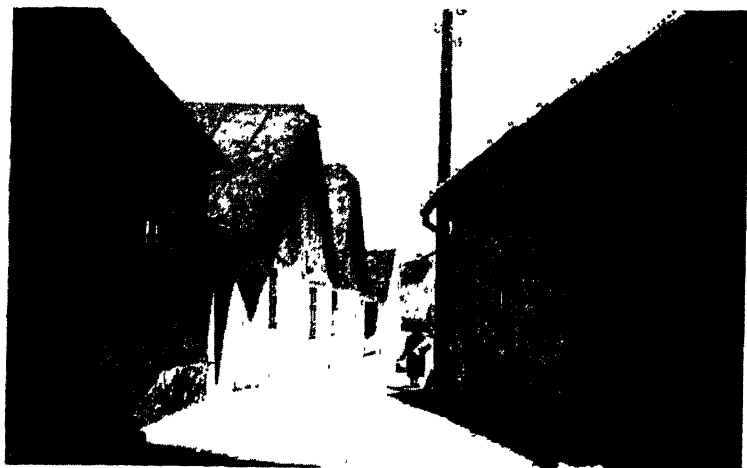
THE BRIDGES JOINING BUDA AND PEST ADD MUCH TO THE BEAUTY OF THE CITY





*Magyar Film Iroda*

A WING OF THE HUNYADI CASTLE, COPIED IN A BUDAPEST PARK



*Magyar Film Iroda*

A QUIANT OLD STREET IN THE TABÁN, AT THE FOOT OF THE VÁR

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with prices to suit all purses; tennis courts, a polo ground, space for pigeon shooting, for football and hockey, the house of the Magyar Athletic Club and the boathouses of many rowing clubs; flowers and velvety lawns and a rose garden; an open-air swimming pool and an indoor one as well, supplied with hot water from a spring; and Gothic ruins of the convent to which a king of Hungary sent his four-year-old daughter Margaret, in fulfilment of a vow—now a favorite spot with lovers who are under her protection. And all these buildings, all the space for sports, still leave enough for park purposes so that the Island isn't crowded. No wonder it's a favorite place for entertaining.

Many persons go to Budapest and never discover another treasure—the woods of the Buda hills. When are they most alluring—in summer when the dense shade of the beech trees makes very hot days endurable, in autumn when they blaze with crimson and orange, on crisp winter days when skiers crowd the paths and tobogganers shout a warning of their approach, or in spring when wild flowers make a gay carpet?

The hills of Buda are so easy of access. Tram or motor bus or private car took me quickly out of the stuffy city into a district of villas with lovely gardens and on to the Jánoshegy, my favorite place for a view down on the town, and Queen Elizabeth's too. What happy memories I have of long walks through the woods

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aths have been made and labeled, but the woods are unspoiled—of teas in villa gardens, of suppers at the little inns!

"I like Budapest better than London or Paris, better than any large city in Europe," said a young man when we started off for a long tramp through the beech woods, "because it's the easiest to get out of. Two minutes from the bus and we'll be quite alone where it's quiet and beautiful. Sometimes I walk a good half hour—even longer—without meeting a soul."

On hot summer days Budapest offers the refreshing delights of the seashore. I went often to the Gellért, a Hungarian combination of hotel, sanatorium with mineral springs baths, and an outdoor swimming pool with artificial waves. No namby-pamby waves are these, but strong enough to sweep you off your feet. To gain admittance you must be in bathing costume. All around are terraces with benches and wicker chairs, places for sunbaths, for tables. You may have a snack between swims or an elaborate luncheon; if the latter, you may keep your dressing-room an hour longer.

The Gellért's the meeting place for smart society folk of Budapest. Here you see the prettiest girls, the latest style in beach pyjamas and swimming suits, and hear all the gossip. Everybody goes to the Gellért, from the Habsburg archduchesses down. The one trouble is that the place is small and often overcrowded.

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"Very nice early in the day," commented a guest who went down every morning for a swim, "but after eleven o'clock it's just goulash!"

There are other places to go—the Strand-bath on the Island and the Széchenyi Baths in the park. Whole families go and stay all day. There's sand around the basins, making it like the beach at low tide. There's a special basin for children, one for beginners, and a deep one for experienced swimmers. The flat roofs of the dressing-room pavilions are for sunbaths. You swim, sunbathe, eat, nap, swim again—and the hottest of August days is delightful.

For oh! it can be hot in Hungary during July and August. A burning heat that seems to be perfectly dry. No humidity in the air, just heat, heat, heat! Until about seven o'clock when a delicious coolness suddenly comes. It reminded me of Bible stories where people met in the cool of the evening. After a few experiments, I learned never to go out in the evening without a wrap.

But rank the Island and the woods and the Strand-baths as you will, the most precious treasure of Budapest is the mineral springs that undermine the whole Gellért hill and crop up in many other places in the city. There are ten or more to choose from, according to your purse and your state of health. When I read a list of all the diseases that are cured or greatly benefited by

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just one of these baths, I wondered why it was that I'd never heard of Budapest as a watering place, why Americans don't flock there as they do to Karlsbad and Baden-Baden.

Some of the baths go back to Roman times. Some were built by the Turks and still have star and crescent to proclaim this fact. Some belong to the city, some to a private company. Some are housed in fine buildings, stately and artistic, others are in simpler quarters. But in all of them I was amazed at the wealth of equipment, at the long list of what they offer—mud baths, sun baths, carbonic acid baths, foam baths, steam or hot air baths, vapor baths, sulphur baths, electric light baths, massage; hair dressing and manicuring and pedicuring too, and I suppose the men's side always has a barber shop; all these things at an absurdly small cost, if you translate *pengös* into dollars.

There are private rooms for baths, but only at rare intervals did I see any Hungarians using them. They prefer standing in company, twenty minutes in the circular basin at this temperature, and then fifteen minutes in another where it's cooler. Always there is the sound of water plashing, for so abundant is the flow from the hot springs that there's no need to economize and the water constantly runs in and out. The required rest too they take in company—a long row of couches with blanketed figures, cooling off after the Turkish bath—

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in this case Turkish both literally and historically.

One of the most delightful invitations I had, soon after my arrival in Budapest, was for supper at the Gellért Kiosk. It's a small restaurant perched on the steep Gellért hill, below the old fort. Not a particularly smart place, not famous as are some for special dishes, it has one thing not to be duplicated anywhere—a view.

The host and I went early, before seven, watched the sunset slowly fade, greeted the guests, and witnessed the coming of dusk and the dark night. A few at a time, then more and more, the lights of the city began to shine. It was far more thrilling than when they'd suddenly burst upon us, that night on the boat.

Lights outlining the bridges; red and green lights on the river craft, coming and going, reflected in the Danube which was dark and velvety. A few lights in the royal palace, standing out darkly against the background, brooding over the city. The flood of light on St. Gellért and the bastion of the fishermen. Lights flickering and twinkling in many villas, hidden among the trees. It was like a scene in fairyland. It was a thing to remember for always and always.

What good things we had to eat that evening! I was still struggling with the long Hungarian menu when my neighbor, a university professor, suggested that I order "a wooden plate." When it came I beheld a trencher of wood with a deep ridge for the sauce; it

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held a mound of mashed potato, flanked by three kinds of meat and garnished with pickle, sweet pepper, and bacon cut like a many-petaled flower; a real medieval trencher, perhaps planned for a medieval appetite, for I could manage only a quarter of the food. The man across from me had chicken paprika, the national dish. Even broiled fish was served with the inevitable red sauce. For dessert they chose for me rolled pancakes, about nine inches long, with jam inside. And with each course we had Hungarian wine, red or white.

The whole evening the gipsy orchestra played. I'd heard much about this music, but was amazed to learn from my professor that they play not gipsy music, but old Hungarian songs. Legend says that they came to this country from India, to play to the poor Hungarians after the Turkish victory at Mohács left the land desolate. The truth is, they were in Hungary long before 1526; they came in the fourteenth century.

With his dark head thrown back, the handsome leader drew his bow across the strings of his violin and I heard, for the first of many, many times, one long note vibrating regularly and then irregularly, gradually dying away as the other instruments drifted into the harmony. Two second violins, a cello, clarinet and piccolo, and a queer, oblong flat instrument with strings which the man struck with little hammers—cimbalom, it's called—made up the orchestra that evening.

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Most of the songs were short, four or six lines, but the music went on without a break, the leader improvising a few measures and swinging into another song. A wild *csárdás*, a lament where the violins wailed and sobbed, a drinking song, a recruiting song, and another *csárdás*, this time a livelier one.

"They don't read music, you know," my neighbor was saying, "they play by ear and remember a melody they've once heard. Shall I prove it to you?" and he beckoned to the gipsy leader. "Please, hum something for him—something especially American." I hummed some measures of one of the slavery songs. "The tempo's a bit difficult, he says, will you please do it again? Ah, now he has it. He asks if you come from America."

Already the leader was signaling his men. Very softly they played the accompaniment to that negro melody, then repeated it louder, all the instruments in perfect harmony. Then to my surprise they played *Way Down Upon the Swanee River* and *Oh, My Poor Nelly Gray* which they'd probably heard from their last American listeners.

The guests at our table changed places so that I talked now with these two, then with another couple. An instinct seems to tell the gipsies, said one of the men, when some listener knows whether they are playing well or badly. Let such a person come into the room and immediately their playing improves.



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"Sometimes," he went on, "I scold them and ask why they play so badly and such a poor choice of songs, and they always answer, 'These people don't appreciate music!' Here," he motioned the leader, "play *Fly, My Swallow* and then *Come in, My Little Rose*."

Closer and closer to our table the leader came, playing all the while. He stopped behind my chair and leaned over, playing "into the ear" as the Hungarians name it, playing with all his heart in the music, like a lover serenading. I turned to my host and asked how many songs this gipsy knew. He laughed as he interpreted the reply:

"I don't know, madam, but if I had a *pengo* for every song I know, I'd be rich and never have to play any more."

"Gipsy songs don't mean much," the professor said, "unless you know the words. I'll translate some roughly. Ah, this is the fiancé's song. A young man in love is sure to ask for it if his girl is having supper with him. Often the leader plays it unasked if he sees lovers in the audience.

"Only one girl exists in the whole world.  
This only one is my own rose, my dove.  
The good God must love me very much  
Since He has given her to me.

Another love-song, for that couple at the corner table.

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The young man is probably whispering it, for it says:

“If you, my little angel, grow weary of loving me  
And love somebody else,  
May God give you a man better than I.  
But for me, only such another as you are.

There's a special song for the sweetheart with blue eyes  
and yet another for the brunette—

“Her hair is brown, her lips red as cherries.  
Cherries grow on every branch,  
But such a lovely girl is nowhere else in the world.

And in this one,” after he'd called out what he wanted  
them to play next, “a village girl is speaking—

“Very strong is my lover.  
Nine gendarmes can not hold him.  
Yet when he hears my voice  
He bows his head on his hands, over the table, and weeps.

Sometimes a song is philosophical—

“A widow in the village has two daughters.  
Both long for happiness.  
One is carried to the cemetery, the other is married.  
Why do you weep, O widow?  
How do you know which daughter has  
found the greater happiness?

That's typical of Hungarian pessimism and sadness.  
Often in the old days a nobleman would listen to the  
gipsies playing, toss the leader a hundred or even a

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thousand crown note and demand, 'Play, play till I weep!' Oh, this is the song of a country lad going for his military service and leaving his sweetheart; evidently she is employed at a castle—

"A window with iron gratings, a gateway with iron bars.  
Bird, you have your mate, you're not lonely as I am.  
When I am far, far away and the soldiers ask me about  
my sweetheart,  
I shall think of the window with iron grating,  
of the gateway with iron bars.

And now a quick-pace *csárdás*—a Liszt fragment—and Queen Elizabeth's favorite song:

"The aspen's silvery leaves are falling.  
A cold autumn wind whirls them away.  
The message of my sweetheart is written on such a leaf—  
Sad words, for we can not live together.

Notice the leader, right in the middle of a song, changing violins with another fiddler. That's an old gipsy custom. If his is off pitch, his ear is quick to note it and protest."

It was late and reluctantly we rose to go. I looked across at the gipsies. Under medium height, slight, with thin, swarthy faces and jet-black eyes, with shapely hands, they made a handsome group; and their smiles were bewitching. The long drawn notes, alternating with several quick ones, produced a wild effect that fascinated me.

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"You can understand now, can't you," asked my host while we waited for the motor, "why the great Rákóczi, going into exile in Turkey, took with him as his one solace his gipsy?"

Budapest is really two cities, put together about sixty years ago. Pest is the new town—comparatively new—where you find the railroad stations and hotels, the best shops, theaters and clubs, the museums—all but two. Pest is low and flat and modern. Buda is hilly and old and quaint and intriguing. Every moment I was conscious of its centuries of history.

I felt that in the Coronation Church when I happened on it one June day. That sounds as if it had witnessed dozens of crownings, but the truth is, it's had just two, for the two last kings of Hungary; but people like the name and use it along with the Mátyás Church, and before that king it was called St. Stephen's and before that the Church of Our Lady.

Just inside the door I stood still and stared and stared. This is a symbol of Hungary, I thought, the meeting place of east and west. Gothic architecture, plus all the wealth of color of the east. Color, color everywhere, and the most brilliant of polychrome decoration—on walls and columns, on piers and arches and ceiling; color in the side chapels, in the banners hanging in the center aisle, in the frescoes.

Later I was to go there with the bishop and learn

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the history of the church, from the very thick walls in the crypt to the last addition made by a king who built the great tower for his wedding. I was to hear stories of the Hungarian saints in the frescoes—St. Imre and St. László with his battle-axe; and Hunyadi János, perhaps Hungary's greatest hero, winning the victory in memory of which the bells ring at noon in Catholic churches all over the world.

The Turks made this church into a mosque, putting their star and crescent high up on the Mátyás tower, and during the long Turkish occupation people forgot the exact place of the Madonna's statue which had been walled up at the approach of the enemy. When the allied army, come to rescue Budapest, bombarded the city, a cannon ball struck the niche and the Madonna was revealed to the startled Turks praying in their mosque. An evil omen, and they fled from the town on the following day. I saw the statue and a fresco of this miraculous event.

The palace too is a lesson in history, for it was built by many different sovereigns from Béla IV to Francis Joseph. Once it housed the most brilliant court of Europe, when Mátyás welcomed artists and poets and learned men from foreign lands. Today only the state apartments are open to the public—high-ceilinged, large rooms that seem formal and empty and cold. They need a great crowd of people—officers in brilliant uniforms

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of blue, red, green, with gold braid and medals galore, and noble ladies with long trains and big fans, with tiaras and flashing jewels, and palace guards with tall halberds and picturesque medieval surcoats, and servants in the royal livery. What with the dozen rooms where the Regent lives, and the palace staff, and the reception rooms and the great white ballroom, there are perhaps sixty-two rooms in use; and eight hundred are lying idle, waiting, waiting till Hungary has a king once more.

In a wing of the palace I saw the entrance to the special room where the coronation insignia are kept, always under guard; and that was as near as I came to seeing the crown of St. Stephen which had taken me to Hungary. No one may see it, not even the most important visitors of state. Not that I counted myself in that group, but the many attempts made in my behalf, by persons of great influence, convinced me that it's really true—no one may see it.

Every one was eager to tell me all about the coronation insignia—the crown, the sword, the scepter, the mantle, the golden apple—the last an ancient symbol of power. They're kept in a coffer which has three keys; one's in the hands of the premier, the other two are given to the Keepers of the Crown who are elected by both houses of Parliament—and to be chosen a Keeper of the Crown is one of the greatest honors Hungary

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can give. While I was in Budapest one of the Keepers died and a new one was voted for.

"He'll have to open the coffer, won't he?" I argued with an acquaintance who was a member of Parliament. "Otherwise, how does he know that he isn't guarding an empty chest? Can't you arrange for me to look on? I promise, on my word of honor, I won't put the crown on my head. Would that make me king, if you revived the Pragmatic Sanction?"

"But you don't understand," he replied very seriously. "Nobody who isn't Hungarian could understand. The crown is holy. It's like—well, it's like this—as if you went into the cathedral during mass and walked right into the chancel and said to the archbishop, 'Please let me see what you have in the cup, let me touch this or that.' I who say this to you, I who make this comparison, am a Protestant, yet to me too the crown is holy."

However I should have been none the wiser if it had been possible for him to grant my request, for the coffer wasn't opened after all. With a good deal of ceremony the old Keeper and his new associate went to that guarded room in the palace and inspected the coffer to make sure that the seals, put on after the last coronation in 1916, were intact.

Church and palace may be full of history, but the most enjoyable thing in Buda was loitering in the old streets in the Vár, the oldest section which used to have

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high walls. I went over and over and over, walking along one street and down the next, looking at every house. Coats of arms over the doors tell that they were built as town palaces for the aristocracy. Unlike many cities in Europe, where whole streets of old houses have fallen into decay and disrepute, these are still the homes of old Hungarian families.

Nearly every one has a lovely doorway, wide enough for a coach. They vary in architecture—Renaissance, simple or elaborate baroque, a few are Gothic. "This house knew the Turks," is the way an owner tells you that his house is very old—before 1541; exact dates can't be known as all records were destroyed by the invaders. Often the street floor has a vaulted passage, interesting arches, quaint stairways and niches, a lovely little courtyard, sometimes with a garden. They are small palaces, two stories high, not large and conspicuous like the fine houses of the Hungarian nobles in Vienna; but they give the "feel" of the Buda of long ago.

For all my delight in exploring the quaint streets of the Vár and of the Tabán, another old district on the Buda side, I found myself always going back to the Danube.

"Yes," said my bishop, "you're right. There's no view like it in all Europe. And the reason is—though I never knew it till a guest from London pointed it out



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—that it's all on such a big scale—the river itself, the fort, the bridges, the huge palace with its long facade setting the measure for hotels and palaces. And on the Pest side you have the House of Parliament and the Academy of Sciences and the Vigadó—that's the place for concerts and balls—all big buildings that fit into the picture. Queen of the Danube—Budapest!"

## III.

## ISTENÉ A SZALLÁS!

In the old days when a traveler in Hungary knocked at the door of a country house and asked for lodging for the night, the answer was always, "Istené a szállás!" (This house belongs to God) which meant, "Come in, you are heartily welcome!"

Is it perhaps a survival from their nomadic life in the east that makes Hungarians so hospitable? Never have I met with such cordial reception, never have I been so urged to stay longer, never before have I received, from a hostess with whom I'd spent four days, an invitation to return for the whole summer.

Hungarians are, I think, the most hospitable people in Europe. They count hospitality as a virtue. This is true not only of the aristocrats on their great estates, where there's plenty of room for many guests and the summer months are a series of house-parties, it's true of middle-class people and of the peasants also.

I found that a very slight contact was sufficient. I

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happened to say that I'd like to see Sopron if only I knew somebody there. A few days later an acquaintance telephoned, "I wrote my Sopron friends, but they won't be at home next month; however Professor S., an expert in Sopron architecture, and Dr. R. who's a great lover of the town, will both be there, so all you need to do is to call on them." What a marvelous time I had, those days in medieval Sopron!

Again by chance I asked a friend if she knew Miskolc and Eger, and were they so important I must surely go there?

"By all means you mustn't miss Eger. It's a charming little town, all built in early baroque, with lots of history. Elinor H. has relatives there. Just tell her when you plan to go. And you must stop in Miskolc for Lillafüred—in the most romantic setting. I'll ask around—"

Her asking around, sure enough, soon gave me a lady in Miskolc. But when I wrote her from delightful Eger the time of my arrival, she replied how sorry she was to be absent, but I was to come anyway; she'd arranged at the hotel and the mayor would appoint an English-speaking person to do the honors of the town.

The Lord Mayor's carriage (and coachman!) met me at the station. I'd been at the hotel ten minutes when his appointee called—a woman born and educated in the United States.

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"I came back to visit my grandmother, fell in love, married, and have lived in Hungary ever since. How good it is to hear English again! Now, please tell me all about America."

So for four days while we saw churches and museum, a vineyard and a ruined castle and the other sights of Miskolc, we talked and talked. She took me (in the mayor's carriage) to Lillafüred, and I thought it all they had said—and more. It's the most romantic fairy-like place I've ever seen.

The very modern and luxurious hotel is built like a hunting lodge of King Mátyás, and has his coat of arms in stained glass windows and in many carvings. There are frescoes of his court musicians and a large window on the stairs showing him returning from a hunt. On one side of the building the hill is terraced with many flowers—a little distance off it looks like hanging gardens. And oh, the lovely views of lake and mountains! No wonder it's so popular a place for winter sports and for hunting parties, as well as for summer holidays.

It follows that I know very little about hotels in Hungary. In more than a year, with all my journeyings, I stayed in just six of them, and found them clean and comfortable. Sometimes an acquaintance was very reluctant to let me go to the hotel and would explain at great length that her house was full of workmen. A bachelor host would protest how unfortunate it was that

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his sister or aunt was away, as he'd so much like me to live at his home.

When my search for peasant costumes took me to small towns, a friend always arranged for me to stay at a private house. Once she confessed to twenty telephone calls before she made the contact. Once in despair she telegraphed the mayor, would he see about accommodations? And he did—in his own house.

Once Ilonka and I stayed at the County House, the guests of the Lord Lieutenant of the county. I had only a brief glimpse of a huge building with long straight lines and classic pillars, before the coachman drove through a vaulted passage into the great courtyard. The guards stood at attention. I stared at them. They were all tall, their coats covered with braid and frogs, back and front. High boots, swords, tall caps with feathers completed the costume.

"Well," I thought as we followed a footman through long corridors to the guest rooms, "a county official here isn't the same as in America."

"He certainly isn't," Ilonka said when I asked why the Lord Lieutenant had such an apartment in the county building. "County organization goes back to the first king of Hungary, and through all these years the Lord Lieutenants have been very important personages, the link between king and people."

"In medieval times the king appointed one of the

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aristocrats whose estates might be distant a journey of several hours; so it was necessary for him to have a residence in the town. This building, for example, has been the County House for over two hundred years. You must see the portraits of former Lord Lieutenants in the council room."

Once I stayed with a member of Parliament, a wonderful house that was, rented from the Cistercians. The monks had built it in the first part of the fifteenth century and gave it up some three hundred years later when it proved too small for them. There were vaulted rooms and corridors, stairs where each step was one wide board, and the quaintest little windows set in the thick walls.

There were three separate gardens. Evidently the monks, for all they were followers of Him who taught brotherly love and humility, had as strict rules of precedence as govern a court. The abbot had a special garden all to himself. The monks who worked in the fields had one. Those who served in church and school had another. The brick walls separating them were too high to see over.

Mária and I went for a weekend in the far south of Hungary. On Sunday evening she asked, "You don't mind an early start tomorrow? We'll go to Kiskörös, stop over a train, and see the birthplace of Petöfi."

"Petöfi—let me think; Alexander Petöfi, isn't it? One

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of your great poets—1848—he died in battle and his body was never found. That's all I know."

"That's something to start with. I've never been to Kiskörös, and while I could find the house, it's always well to have a local guide. So in Budapest I telephoned the League of Hungarian Women, asked if there was a branch in Kiskörös, and told them to send word we were coming."

The next morning as our train was slowing down at Kiskörös, I inquired, "You said, stay over a train. How long do we have here?"

"Till something after two."

"Six hours," I lamented inwardly, "to see one cottage. What in the world will we do with that much time to kill, here in this little town?"

I should have reckoned on Hungarian hospitality.

Three ladies were at the station to welcome us, with great bunches of flowers. We drove nearly to the end of the village, turned into a little side street, and stopped before a white-plastered house. It had three rooms and a good-sized garden—somewhat above the average of peasant houses in Hungary; for the poet's father didn't work in the fields, he had a meat shop, which the peasants consider one step higher.

In the middle of the long side, the entrance opened right into the kitchen—a typical peasant kitchen with a huge stove made of white clay, and a hole above to

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let the smoke out. In the front room were pictures of Petöfi and editions of his poems, and dozens of streamers of red, white and green ribbon, left from the wreaths brought by groups that are constantly going to Kiskörös as to a shrine.

"Our greatest lyric poet," Mária began. "He died at twenty-six. Who knows how world famous he might have become? When you go to Segesvár—"

"Here come the children. Tell the English lady to step to the door, please."

"The English lady" complied. There were sixty boys and girls, eight to twelve years old, from the village school where Petöfi was once a pupil. They stood in a crescent in the garden and sang for me—the words were poems by Petöfi, the music by several Hungarian composers. They sang in two parts, in three, even in four. Once four boys sang and the rest hummed an accompaniment. Excellent singing it was, the best I heard in Hungary.

Then we walked a short distance to the home of the president of the Kiskörös League where we found a roomful of ladies. Mrs. S. welcomed me in a speech so sincere, so heartfelt, that the tears came to my eyes. As I took the bouquet of red and white roses, tied with the tricolor ribbons, I wondered how I could thank her.

We all sat down at the long table for an elaborate second breakfast—bread and salami (a cold, spiced



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meat); sandwiches of half a dozen kinds, without tops; hot biscuits and jam; coffee, tea, red wine and white; and—and—and— I autographed all the place cards. There were many speeches. I even made a short speech myself, putting in all the Hungarian words I knew, with Mária translating.

A knock at the door. In came a pretty girl in a white frock trimmed with red and white and green, wearing a headdress with many-colored beads and a gay bodice. She also made a speech of welcome in the name of the girls at the *gymnazium* and gave me another bouquet. Then the president of the Writers' Club, with more roses and one of his books and more speechifying. Never before was I so bewelcomed.

With four of our hostesses Mária and I walked out to the village cemetery to see the grave of Petöfi's old nurse whom he loved dearly. She took care of him till he was seven, when the family left Kiskörös. More than once Petöfi wrote a poem about her. She lived to be over eighty and the proudest item in her career was that Alexander, as she called him, had been in her charge.

The Women's League in Kiskörös took as their special task the care of her grave. They've arranged it most attractively, with forget-me-nots planted thickly around a boulder with a tablet giving her name and dates, and four lines of a Petöfi poem beginning, "I turned at twilight to my old nurse." I was presented

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with a doll, dressed like the nurse, in the traditional costume of that district—heavy black satin skirt with flowers of purple silk, the loose blouse worn outside the skirt, an oblong apron without fullness, edged on three sides with black lace; and a large handkerchief in her hand.

We went back down the main street of the village to the hotel where luncheon was waiting. The table looked very gay, with strips of red and green crepe paper and little Hungarian flags. After a delicious soup we had chicken paprika; then cake and wine. There was such interesting talk with the husbands of some of the hostesses that the time raced by and some one had to warn us that we must hurry to the train.

At the station there was one more surprise—one lady had sent her little maid, dressed in Sunday best, that I might see a costume of today—a very full skirt of dark blue, that stood stiffly out, a plain, tight, little basque buttoned down the front, no cap as she was unmarried.

“And I wondered,” I said to Mária when we were out of sight of the waving handkerchiefs, “I wondered how in the world we’d put in six hours in Kiskörös. Don’t talk to me, please, I’m going to sleep. I’m utterly worn out by such amazing hospitality.”

Another weekend we went to Szekszárd, the largest town near the district called Sárköz. Sunday we motored to three isolated villages. With us went a Szekszárd

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lawyer who had, alas! telephoned to the inn and ordered dinner. Not that the meal wasn't delicious, from soup to jelly cake with foamy wine sauce, to say nothing of the wine itself; and it was served in a private room, if you please. I say alas! because I should have liked to accept one of the four dinner invitations from peasants.

The whole afternoon we spent going to this house and to that one, to see the houses themselves, and the linen woven and embroidered by the women—such a great supply as each house had on hand. The Sárköz looms are narrow and bed covers, curtains, table covers and so on are made of striped material, as many strips as are needed sewed together. The stripes are always red and black, in an infinite number of combinations. The embroidery is always white on black, lovely old designs that are now traditional.

We saw too Sárköz costumes—skirts of heavy flowered silk, pleated, at least eight meters around; the blouses, generally of silk too, but not the same material as the skirt, buttoned straight down the front. This silk comes from France and is specially made for sale in this district of Hungary. It costs nowadays thirty-six *pengős* a meter, but doesn't wear as well as it formerly did when the price was fifty-four *pengős*. In one house I saw the hostess' wedding dress, and the silk was still perfectly good, not split even in the pleats, after thirty-five years.

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In every house they gave us something to eat or to drink, or both. I drank red wine, then white, ate cake here and cookies there, and cherries and more wine. One woman invited us for tea, and nearly all the other women went along; there must have been twenty people at table, yet the supply of bread and cake seemed endless.

"No, thank you," I said when some one passed me salami and bread and a rich cake.

Mária nudged me.

"Never mind how you feel afterward. You simply must eat and eat a lot. You'll offend them beyond measure if you refuse."

I groaned, but there was no alternative. I took just as little as I possibly could. Sometimes I'd slyly put something onto Mária's plate when the hostess slipped out of the room to fetch more.

While we loitered at the table after tea, one of the women began to sing. Every one joined in and for three-quarters of an hour they sang, drank healths, and sang again. Many of the songs were old Sárköz melodies that have never been written down, but now the village school teacher is trying to rescue them before it's too late, and get them down in black and white.

What a good time they have in a Hungarian village, I thought, without spending any money!

This same spirit of hospitality exists among the aris-

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tocrats. In a Hungarian castle—the owner's house on a big estate is always called “the castle”—life is more like a house-party in England than anything else I can compare it with. Breakfast is brought to your room and you amuse yourself until dinner—generally two o'clock. Sometimes one of the young countesses would arrange, the evening before, to take me for a walk in the forest, and I'd hear the others fixing the hour for tennis or a horseback ride. Sometimes a note would appear on my breakfast tray:

If you would enjoy it, my husband will drive you over his propriety this morning. Please come down at ten.

G. H. M.

A gong sounded for dinner, and guests and family assembled in the drawing room. Every one came up to shake hands with me and to say, “*Jo napot*” (good day). After a few minutes of chat, the butler threw open the double doors and the countess walked quickly across the hall. Two butlers, in gray livery with green trouser stripes and silver oak leaves on their collars, opened the dining room doors. Then the guests went in, one at a time.

Though I stayed in that house almost a fortnight, I never succeeded in working out who went ahead of who. I'd watch carefully and decide, “It's like this: a princess,

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a countess, then a baroness, then I." Some one always had to signal me. But the next day proved my rule all wrong.

Did the newest arrivals take precedence? Was it strictly according to titles and rank? Did a general make some difference? Did age perhaps have something to do with it? Why did a cousin who was a Margravine upset my schedule? I never found out.

Guests and hosts were alike thoughtful in looking after me and explaining what might puzzle me. My first country house visit was during the season when corn on the cob was at its best and it was served frequently—served as an entree or as what the English call a savory, after peach shortcake or chocolate pudding. It was brought in steaming hot, wrapped in a napkin. With it the butlers brought deep glass bowls half full of cold water and some people dipped their ears of corn in to cool them off; some like it hot, some like it cold. Never was it served with butter.

"Have you ever seen this?" the countess asked, the first day we had corn.

"Yes."

I wondered why she looked so surprised.

"Do you know how to eat it? Shall I show you?"

This time I looked surprised. She's accustomed to English guests, I reminded myself. But fancy, telling a Middle Westerner what to do with corn on the cob!

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The next day I was moved along a few places and my neighbor was one of the Széchenyis, who had just arrived. When the corn was served he turned to me solicitously and asked, "Have you ever seen this? Do you know how to eat it?"

"Oh, yes, thank you," and I tried to keep my face straight.

Two days later a baroness asked me again, "I'm sure this must be new to you, shall I explain how you eat it?"

At the sixth telling, I was still making a great effort not to laugh. Of all possible Americans, to explain to me who was born in the Cornlands! Yet had it been a wholly new dish, to be eaten in a special way, how grateful I should have been.

Exactly as a peasant hostess took me proudly into her "best room" and showed me her possessions—the bed piled high with pillows, elaborately embroidered, the many large candles with blue ribbons hanging on the wall, the row of plates and pitchers—the owners of castles took me over their houses.

In one there were more than sixty rooms, numbered as in a hotel. That was to make it easy for the servants, the countess explained. How many servants? Ten in the house—three cooks, three butlers, four maids; outside, coachmen and gardeners and two ball boys for tennis. Never fewer than thirty for meals, she added.

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The kitchen was a huge blue and white room with three work tables and twelve windows—six of them in an upper row; to open them a man went up a ladder. There was a store room for flour and dry things, another for preserves, another for meat. Across the courtyard was the ice house; they cut ice in the winter in artificial pools that were originally made for retting flax.

Down a long flight of steps into the wine cellar, with a vaulted ceiling of brick. We walked between long rows of wooden casks, each labeled and dated. Just for their own use they make fifty hectoliters a year—about six thousand quarts.

One morning I drove with the count over the estate—or rather, over a part of it, for it is ten thousand acres; about a third in farm lands, the rest in forest. I went into two of the peasant houses which were spotlessly clean, and things were very tidy. I went into the stables and cow barns, and peeped into the building where the fifty extra workers for the summer live. We drove through the woodland and stopped to talk with some of the foresters.

At one place on the estate there's a gipsy camp. It's been there for so many years, with different inhabitants; they stay two or three years, move on, and others take their places. We drove close enough to get a good view of their huts, made of odd boards, branches and earth.

"That may be enough of a house for summer," I com-



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mented, "but what do they do when stormy days come and in the winter?"

"They don't seem to mind. In many places there's constant complaint against the gipsies for stealing, but we never have any trouble on that score. Perhaps they think we'd send them away if they stole. Besides, they earn a little money now and again. The chief forester uses the gipsy children to take messages, for we don't have telephone service to all the buildings on the estate."

One gipsy woman came out of a hut and stared at us. I counted fourteen youngsters. None of the children had many garments on and the two smallest had not one stitch between them.

"Here's a story about the gipsies that is absolutely true. One of my wife's friends was greatly annoyed when she went for a drive and day after day gipsy boys and girls, quite nude, ran after the carriage and begged for pennies. So she sent them a big supply of clothes. The next day she drove that way to see the result of her charity. This time all the grownups, both men and women, as nude as the youngsters, ran after the carriage, asking for money."

Would I care to see the estate documents? the count asked one day. One was the grant for that "propriety" to one of his ancestors, signed by Joseph II, with a huge seal in a box. There were documents bearing the names of Maria Theresa and Joseph I, written in formal and

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stately Latin; and a much earlier one, beautifully illuminated, giving a university degree to some remote ancestor—the first doctor's degree ever given in Hungary.

There was one rainy afternoon during that visit and after tea the countess said, "Well, no tennis tournament today. Would you like to see the coronation costumes?"

If I'd known all the trouble it meant, perhaps I'd have felt obliged to answer, "Oh, no, thank you," but luckily I didn't know and said eagerly, "I'd love to." One of the daughters came to help, and the head maid. The butler brought in two wooden boxes, the covers put on with many long screws.

From the smaller box the countess lifted out the jacket. It was made of brocaded yellow satin and lined with plain yellow. There were many loops of braid and frogs of dark brown. It had a deep sable collar and sable edged the bottom, the loose sleeves, and where the sleeves were slashed. Putting it on is a simple matter, for the arms don't go through the sleeves; the jacket hangs over the left shoulder and a heavy jeweled chain keeps it in place.

While the larger box was being opened, I begged for the story.

"This was made in 1867 for my husband's grandmother to wear at the coronation of Francis Joseph. And it wasn't worn again until 1916. No, I didn't wear it; my mother-in-law was living and she went with my husband.

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The costumes in my family, of course, went to the wives of my brothers. I didn't want to have one made, as I knew this one would come to me some day; so I didn't go to the coronation itself, but I had a good place for the other ceremonies.

"No, Hungarian ladies don't wear these clothes for other occasions. They are frightfully heavy and wearing one just for a few hours is dreadfully fatiguing. I remember in 1916 all my friends were quite worn out after the coronation, the service is so long and there's so much getting up and down. Now the men's gala costumes are almost as rich, but they're much less heavy; they're frequently worn at weddings—that's why my husband's is kept in Budapest."

By this time the last screw was out and the butler lifted the lid off the deep box. On top lay the headdress of gold net, with long tapes to fasten it to the tiara. The dress itself was of white net. The waist had sequins of red and gold all over the front and over the short, very full sleeves. There was a red velvet bodice, pointed in the front, with red cords lacing it back and forth over the net.

The very long skirt was white net appliqued with gold in a rather large pattern. The slip was of heavy white moiré, so stiff it would almost stand alone. The train, also appliqued with gold, was exceedingly long and must indeed have been a burden, for it hung from the waist

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and not from the shoulders. Every bit of this gold work was wrapped in black tissue paper, to make sure it shouldn't tarnish.

No wonder such costumes are handed down from one generation to another and another. They cost, I learned later, anywhere from two hundred dollars to ten thousand.

The young countesses were as hospitable as their parents. One evening their mother and I were in the drawing room when there came a loud knock at the door. She called out something in Hungarian and in came her three daughters, a girl cousin, and an English girl spending the summer there—all in Hungarian costumes, with a general effect of red and white. They were talking and laughing gaily.

"We are invited," she turned to me, "to the playhouse—for music and something to eat. You'd better get a wrap, please."

We made quite a procession as we trooped through the new wing of the castle and along a path to the playhouse on the hillside. It had a little garden with a picket fence. The cottage had kitchen and living room. There was painted peasant furniture, pottery, and a frieze of Hungarian pictures. The supper proved to be fresh apricots, cakes and wine.

We sat on the terrace and the girls sang for us, standing in a half circle, lighted by one candle and a lantern.

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They sang six or eight Hungarian songs and did them very well.

"That's a typical peasant song," the countess explained. "This very gay one is a soldiers' song. It's hard to make the words seem much if you translate them, they lose in the process. The one you said had such a lovely melody means only this:

"Some one steals away my horse.

It is not my lover who steals the horse at night."

Then the girls danced the *csárdás*, at first slowly and with dignity, two steps to the right, two to the left; then suddenly whirling madly around.

So intermarried are the aristocrats of Hungary that if you're a guest in one house and want to go on guesting, you could easily spend months at it, one host passing you on to the next. They are all related. They all call each other by their first names. Indeed there are so many Széchenyis, Zichys, Telekis, Bethlens and so on that the only way to keep them straight is to say always the Christian name too.

Hospitality in Hungary seems boundless. Yet when I spoke of it, people would say, "We can't do as much as we used to do, for difficult times have come to Hungary since 1914. Why, in the old days guests were so welcomed and so cherished that the host used to have his servants

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take the wheels off the carriage so that the visitors couldn't possibly leave. On some estates they weighed the guests on arrival and announced how many kilos they must gain before they could go on; and this record was put into the guest book."

*Istené a szállás!* I rejoiced that I didn't share the fate of two Englishmen who arrived late in the evening at a village in Hungary with an introduction to the doctor. Even before he learned of the letter he said very cordially, "*Istené a szállás!*" They stared and asked him to translate that into French. When they heard, "This house belongs to God," they thought it must be a monastery and instead of staying there comfortably, they went off to the village inn.

## IV.

## HORSES AND CATTLE AND LAND

Hungary is primarily an agricultural country. Three out of every four persons work on the land or at something connected with agriculture. So at every opportunity I went away from towns and cities into the country, feeling that there I'd see the real Hungary—the land of old tradition and story.

On all the estates where I was a guest, if only for a few hours, I was taken to see the stables. Horses are a possession of which Hungarians are very proud—perhaps that too is a leftover from their nomadic life in the east? And what fine horses they have!

Straight east from Budapest, a few kilometers from Debrecen, lies the Hortobágy (three syllables, gy sounds like J)—a flat, level country that stretches for miles and miles, as far as you can see, with no hills or forest to break the view. Every year, at the end of June, a great fair is held there. Some friends invited me to go with them.

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We motored out from Debrecen, that hot June morning, with a professor of geography. Amazed at the extent of pasture land, I asked how large the Hortobágy was and who owned it.

"Debrecen," said Ellen. "Once upon a time this was all fertile, well cultivated farms, with two hundred and forty-five villages. Every single village was destroyed by the Turks, who left the place a desert. When at last they were driven from the country, enormous tracts of land were sold for the lowest prices, and Debrecen bought eighty thousand acres.

"Of all the districts in Hungary, this is the nearest to primitive life in the east when people were nomads, roaming over the land with great herds of horses and cattle and sheep. Today the animals here belong to the town of Debrecen; grazing privileges are sold to private owners; and some of the land is rented out in small farms. Did you remember," she turned to the professor, "to order the Délibáb for our American guest?"

"I can not be sure," he looked anxiously off to the horizon, "but I think it will come."

"What is the De—de—"

"Délibáb. You don't know her story? Well, the professor must tell us the old legend and then explain it scientifically, before we see one."

"A beautiful princess once lived here and her name was Délibáb. She was courted by a king who reigned by



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the river Tisza. When he asked for her hand, her father said, 'Yes, you may marry my daughter, but you must carry her away to your kingdom by ship.' Any one else would have thought that a decided No, for how could any ship cross the great plains?

"But this man was a lover and nothing daunted, he set to work to dig a canal, using all his soldiers, the old men, even women and children. Kilometer after kilometer, the canal advanced across the plain of Hungary while the suitor, on his white horse, rode up and down directing. But before it was finished there was a great thunder storm and he was struck by lightning and killed.

"When this sad news reached Princess Délibáb, she died too and now she wanders always over the Hortobágy, seeking for his grave. Herdsmen and shepherds see her in the dark clouds that often race across the sky, the rain that follows is her tears. Under the trees by a distant lake she loves to sit, dreaming of her lover. She is the spirit that haunts the Hortobágy."

"And the scientific side?" I reminded him after a pause.

"Here and there on the plain are pools of water—not large enough to be called lakes. The sun shines on this water at different angles, creating optical illusions so that you see—or think you see—objects doubled, or inverted."

"Oh, a mirage?"

"Yes, and it has another name too—Fata Morgana.

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But all Hungarians, of course, call it the Délibáb."

"Why don't you see it every day? Why did you have to order it specially for me?"

"Two things are necessary for the Délibáb," he explained, "great heat and some moisture in the air—two or three days after a rain. Now it did rain day before yesterday, so I think we're fairly certain to see the Délibáb."

He was right. Whether he'd ordered it just for me or not, I saw it seven times.

"Look this way," the professor would say, "close to the horizon."

Obediently I'd look where he pointed, seeing only the ordinary stretch of grassy plain, when suddenly as I gazed there was a small body of water. I rubbed my eyes to make sure I was seeing right. There was a row of trees, the lake getting longer and longer, as if the water were spreading out slowly to both sides; at last it was a fourth of the way round the horizon—an unusually large one; and suddenly while I was still staring, it was all gone!

Never twice the same. I saw a distant village with a clump of trees; a blue, blue lake shimmering in the heat, with trees beyond it; a single row of trees like those marking the boundary of an estate, lifted up into the sky; cattle, upside down, going toward a well; the red roof of a house swimming in the air.

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Before the war buyers came to the Hortobágy fair from every part of Hungary and from many lands in Europe. It was only an ordinary occurrence when ten thousand horses and cattle were sold in one day. Now owing to the economic situation prices were way, way down and far fewer sales were made. The attendance was perhaps ten percent of what it had been.

The fair had attracted a large number of hangerson. There were booths for hats, for whips and harness and saddles, booths for things to eat, to drink, toys for children, gingerbread hearts and cakes with colored pictures pasted on them. There were gipsies—many of them. And beggars, showing a withered arm or sore leg. Strolling along the outskirts of the crowd, looking very important, but really finding little to do, were the Hungarian gendarmes, with cock feathers in their hats and muskets with bayonets fixed.

The crowd would give place and along would come the carriage of some estate owner, with five horses harnessed two and three; the coachman with a plume in his hat and ribbons hanging down his back.

But most fascinating of all were the natives of the Hortobágy — scores of horseboys, cowboys, shepherds, dressed in their Sunday best. They've lived here for generations, changing as little as has the great plain itself. They are, of all Hungarians today, the truest to type, standing so straight, so proud, looking fearlessly out on

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the world, just as their ancestors did in the days of Árpád.

In the Hortobágy a man doesn't take care of a variety of stock; each one is a specialist. There are very strict rules among them: the horseboy takes precedence of the cowboy, the cowboy goes before the shepherd, and so on, just as at court. The *csikós* (horseboy—the equivalent of our western cowboy) is almost born in the saddle and can't remember when he learned to ride. Instead of a saddle he has a piece of red cloth, about a third as large as an American saddle blanket; to this is fastened a strap ending in stirrups—no girths at all! For there are many rough places on this plain, and riding without fixed stirrups means no accident if the horse should stumble and fall.

A *csikós* cares for forty or fifty horses and knows each one. He's an expert with his long whip and with his lasso. I watched, fascinated, while one of them drove seventy-five horses in a zigzag toward us, merely by calling out to them and using his long-lashed whip to tap a horse at the far side when it was time to turn.

The *csikós* has a special costume—very wide trousers that look like a divided skirt, reaching just below the knee, blue or red blouse open at the throat, a black felt hat like a soup plate inverted, a short apron of dark blue, sometimes with a band of scarlet embroidery at the hem, high boots, and a long, very picturesque white coat of a

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felt-like material—made and embroidered at home.

This coat, called a *sziir*, is a marvel of workmanship. The sleeves are wide and are often sewed up at the wrists to serve as pockets, for generally it's worn like a cape, carelessly flung round the shoulders. The collar is very deep in the back and hangs straight down to the waist, and this large square offers a splendid place for embroidery. Some are done all in red, some in black, some in red and black; never two with the same design. There's embroidery on the sleeves too, and along the bottom of the coat.

Cowboy and shepherd wear the *suba*, a sheepskin cape reaching to the ankles. The wool is left on the hide and makes the lining. The outside is glossy, tanned leather, covered with embroidery—roses, tulips, peacock feathers. Sometimes instead of embroidery, done by the wife or sweetheart, the *suba's* trimming is gay designs made of small pieces of different colored leather, applied on the gray or yellow background—the work of a special man who earns his living from this tailoring in leather. (Applique is one more thing the Hungarians brought with them from the east.)

The Hortobágy men lead a lonely life. Often they're away for days at a time, cooking their meals wherever they happen to be, using coat or cape for shelter when it rains. Their social center is the *csárda* (inn) where they gather when work is done, to smoke their pipes (over a



*Magyar Film Iroda*  
A HERDSMAN OF THE HORTOBÁGY



BUFFALOES ARE AS STRONG AS OXEN

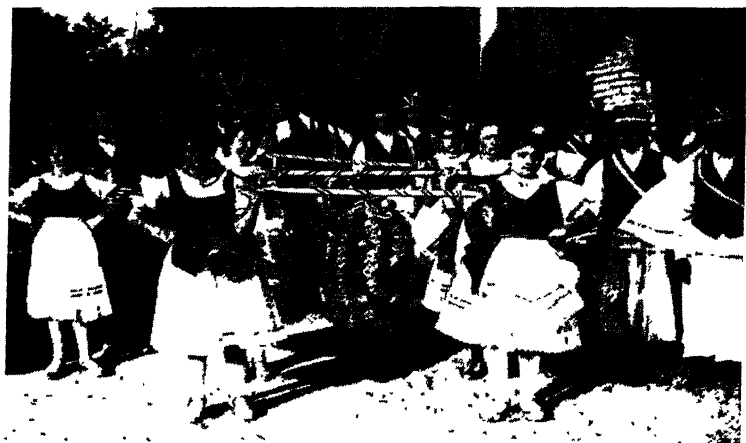


HUNGARIAN RAMS HAVE UNUSUAL HORNS



*Bressey*

THATCHED ROOF, PAINTED HOUSE-WALL, PAPRIKA PODS HANGING  
IN THE NARROW PORCH, AND PEASANTS IN THE KALOCSA COSTUME



*Magyar Film Iroda*

THE PEASANTS OF TOKAJ CELEBRATING THE VINTAGE HARVEST

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foot long, with hinged lids on the bowls) and listen to the gipsies play and dance the *csárdás*, which takes its name from the inn.

But there are also the wells, places for Hortobágy gossip—picturesque structures which from a distance look like a great T; a tall, straight pole sticking up, a second laid across it, with a bucket at one end, a heavy stone at the other—the same device for drawing water that was used in Bible times.

There seems to be an abundance of water all over the Hortobágy. I asked if they ever dig down without finding it and the answer was No—there's always water six to eight meters down, even if wells are close together.

Such fine thoroughbred horses as we saw at the Hortobágy. Cattle also, thousands of them, white, wide-horned. The peasants, they say, judge a yoke of oxen by the spread of their horns, without paying any attention to the length of their legs or the depth of their chests. And buffalo, strange beasts who are known, from their solid black color, as "the ministers of the farm"; they're strong, as strong as oxen, and give a great deal of very rich milk; but they don't stand the cold and get frightfully thin in the winter. Sheep too; Hungarian rams have horns that stand out from the head, instead of coiling round; and along with the sheep the shepherd's white dogs, a special breed called *Komondor*, very strong, able to fight with wolves, and the small black dogs called *Puli*. All of these



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—white cattle, buffalo, sheep and dog—are the kind the Hungarians brought with them from the east, and unchanged the types exist today.

As might be expected in a land which has such fine horses, racing is very popular in Hungary. I had an invitation to a prince's studfarm. The studmaster looked like an old English squire, with ruddy face and gray hair. The stables were built around three great squares, covered with sand, raked in tiny diagonals. There were flowers growing everywhere. For exercising the horses there were several small paddocks with high fences.

What fine creatures they were—fifteen or twenty of them! The studmaster proudly told us their pedigrees, the records of those that had won in the races. One was the winner of the derby at Vienna, a prize of fourteen thousand shillings. They were going in a few days to Budapest where some of the yearlings, as he quaintly put it, would "enter the university"—begin training on the racetracks there.

But it was at Mezöhegyes that I saw the finest horses of all. That's a place in the south of Hungary where in 1786 the state established a studfarm to introduce foreign stock into the country and to improve Hungarian breeds. Gradually it came to include more and more till it was also an agricultural experiment station and a model farm and a station for raising horses for the army.

Heralded by a telegram from the Ministry of Agricul-

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ture in Budapest, I was warmly welcomed by the director. I lived at the officers' club—that doesn't mean army officers, but the heads of the various departments at the studfarm which has fifty thousand acres of land and a permanent population of eight thousand. We drove to the different centers and saw horses, oxen, sheep, milch cows; the model dairy; the seed house, hemp and sugar and alcohol factories.

But it's particularly horses for which Mezöhegyes is famous. The prize horses live in two special buildings, where they have huge box stalls; every two horses have a groom. A dozen were led out for me to see. One at a time they came toward us, the horse trotting, the groom in high black boots leaping alongside, then a sudden halt while the director recited his name and pedigree and gave him a raw carrot. They were all branded with the letter M, a crown and a number.

Some of the Mezöhegyes horses are pure-blooded, some half. One family came originally from Normandy, the home of large horses in France, and was introduced into Hungary by Napoleon. Tall horses I'd seen before, broad horses I'd seen before, but never any that were so broad and also so tall. They were huge, yet with the narrow faces and finely shaped legs that mark the thoroughbred.

When I exclaimed at the number of animals—fifteen hundred brood mares, sixteen hundred pigs, hundreds of Hungarian-merino sheep, and so on—the director shook

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his head sadly and said, "In the whole world there was not another station like Mezöhegyes. Now it's only a fraction of its former glory. Out of eight hundred splendid horses the Roumanians took all but three—and they were saved by being kept for days in the drawing rooms of our officials. We had to start again almost from the beginning, and the state could give us very little capital. Moreover now every department must show a profit, so we've had to give up the educational work and the experimental fields are planted in sugar beets. If only you'd come before the war!"

The estates I saw varied enormously. One was nearly all forest land. Another made a specialty of tobacco. A third was a dairy farm. And one, where I spent a day in July, went in for straight grain farming. It had been in the time of my host's grandfather an estate of more than ten thousand acres; but it's the custom in Hungary, if there's no entail, to divide the land among all the sons and daughters.

"As far as you can see," my host said as we drove along, "is all our land, but this house belongs to an uncle and that one to a cousin, and the one on your left to my brother. No, my farm isn't large—not large for this part of Hungary; it's"—we tried to figure it out, putting Hungarian *hold* into Polish *hectares* and finally into our measure—"it's about twelve hundred acres."

The house had ten rooms, all on one floor, with long

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verandas facing the drive and the garden. Beyond a great stretch of lawn were the flower gardens, a large vegetable garden, a small vineyard to supply wine for their own table, a splendid tennis court, a swimming pool fed by a warm spring, and a carp pond that provides fish for the whole estate and ice for the summer. I thought they had plenty to make life comfortable, and every year they are traveling from November to March.

We inspected the fields of grain—wheat, rye, barley, maize—looked at the sugar beets and tobacco, and stopped where the harvesters were at work, cutting early wheat. There were twenty-four of them, men and women, under a foreman. They begin at three in the morning and work till five in the afternoon, for five or six weeks; and hard work it is. Their wage is ten percent of the selling price of the wheat.

Mr. R. called to the foreman to have the group start at a fresh place so that I could see from the beginning. Twelve scythes swinging in perfect rhythm, the men advanced slowly cutting a wide swath, and the twelve women followed, tying up the bundles with twisted bands made of wheat stalks. Then both men and women piled up the bundles in a Greek cross, four on each side, heads turned to the center, and two on the top. The last one is called "the abbot," because in olden times it was given to the church.

A hundred extra people come for the summer, help-

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ing out the estate peasants, who are thirty-five families. There's a school with sixty children; Mr. R. provides the building and the state pays the teacher.

After supper we went out to the stables and watched the cattle being watered. Not far off was the long row of peasant houses, facing the one street to which they all turned the gable end; that is typically Hungarian, to ensure the maximum of privacy.

"Would you like to go into one of their houses?"

I nodded eagerly.

"Well, please choose which one. I don't want you to think we keep one just for show."

"The third," I said at random.

It was a white-plastered house with blue gables, the roof built out at one side to make a long, narrow porch. Ears of corn, yellow and red, hung there and dark red paprika pods. In the three rooms lived father, mother, and five children. The center room was the kitchen. The mother, cooking at the huge clay stove, threw in a double handful of cornstalks and made a big blaze, so that I could see how the smoke went out through the opening in the roof. In the front room were two single beds, piled high with pillows—nearly to the ceiling; that showed how well off this family was.

"They don't sleep here, you know," said Mr. R. with a grin.

"Where then?"

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"Oh, in the porch this time of year, on the floor anywhere, by the stove in cold weather. This is called 'the best room'; it's used for guests, for special occasions, for the birth of a child. The other room's where they really live."

What amazed me in that house, as in every peasant house I saw in Hungary, was the tidiness everywhere. Food supplies and clothes and toys and tools—everything in its place.

One estate owner took me to see a practical demonstration: eight acres, fenced off by itself, planted with fruit trees of many kinds, and tracts of maize, wheat, rye, vegetables and small fruits. He has proved that from eight acres a man can, if he works hard, make a living for his family, pay his taxes, and educate his children.

To see how the peasants are taught something of farming, I visited one of the state agricultural schools. This was a day school for both girls and boys, from fourteen to eighteen. They pay no fees and get a percentage of the sales of what they raise or make. The boys do all the work on this thirty acres, raising crops and caring for the animals. The girls learn about flowers and vegetables, the care of milch cows, and how to sew and embroider and make lace.

The largest estate I saw was a hundred and five thousand acres—or rather, had been. A few years ago the state obliged the owner to sell, at a fixed price, thirty

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thousand acres to peasants who had no land. (However, as each of the three sons has thirty thousand acres, the family can't be called poor.) The estate was divided into sixteen sections, managed independently. I saw two of them. Everything was on a big scale—four steam plows, each making seven furrows at a time; long, one-story buildings for the stock; a stud of seventy-five fine horses, a cross of Arabian and Hungarian. The owner provides two doctors and a pharmacy, and at one place has built a school, a church and a model village of four thousand.

As a contrast, I went the next day to a peasant's farm. A prisoner of war for five years, this man returned from Russia to find his land—fifteen acres—in utter ruin, both fields and buildings. He worked very hard and now owns fifty acres, so well managed that he had won, the year before, a prize of two thousand *pengös* offered for the best farm in that district.

The four-room house was very clean and attractive, with the porch wall painted in an all-over flower design. There was a radio, a sewing machine, a wine cellar, and in a separate room a machine for pressing oil out of sunflower seeds—an oil greatly esteemed for cooking. Long rows of sunflowers and of poppies, white and red, are a part of every peasant's crop.

Large as estates sometimes are in Hungary, one group of landowners is content with small holdings. Vineyards may be as small as two acres, up to eight or ten. I saw

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one very large one—sixty acres. They are planted on a hillside so that the water will drain off quickly.

Until my Tokaj hostess took me to see her vineyard and told me about it, I had no idea that grapes could mean so much work and such never-ending work. The vines are staked separately, a meter apart each way, not trained over an arbor as with us. Each plant must be covered with earth for the winter, then uncovered in the spring and hoed around. Four times during the summer she hires women who go down the rows, cutting off the long tendrils, for the vines mustn't be allowed to get more than a meter high.

The weeds are hoed up frequently, and the earth dug out around each plant so that the air can circulate freely and the grapes ripen well. She keeps a constant lookout for contagious diseases and sprays very often. For the harvest two dozen workers come. The grapes are picked and pressed, all in one day.

"How much wine do you get from your two acres?" I asked.

"It varies. We've owned this vineyard three years and the returns have been eighteen hectos, twenty-two, thirteen. But it's interesting work and keeps my husband and me out of doors. That was my real reason for wanting to own a vineyard."

One of the things I longed to see in Hungary was a harvest festival, but I found it not so easy as I'd sup-



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posed. The harvest was below the average and festivals were given up, for the peasants had nothing to rejoice over and estate owners felt too poor to provide the feast. At last, after countless inquiries made in my behalf, some one telephoned that forty tourists from Switzerland were in Hungary for a week and there'd be a harvest festival at Mezökövesd for them to see, and did I want to go along?

I accepted eagerly, for Mezökövesd is famous for its peasant costumes, which are gorgeous with embroidery, done in the gayest and brightest colors on black aprons and black coats and white blouses.

The market place was crowded with visitors and peasants when we arrived. In front of the village church school teacher and priest waited while the dozen couples chosen for this festival marched in, carrying their harvest tools—rakes, scythes, sickles, trimmed with ribbons and flowers. Two men bore on their shoulders a pole from which hung the great crown, made of several kinds of grain and decked out with pink and blue paper flowers and bits of ribbon.

With several speeches it was presented and all the people sang a traditional harvest song. Then the procession, with the mob following closely, marched off to the inn yard for a dance—that's the important part of the festival! they danced in couples, all in a circle, two girls together, or two men, and solo dances besides. They

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danced the *csárdás* over and over and over. A peasant bowed before me and motioned for me to come dance with him; how disappointed he looked when I had to shake my head!

"But I have an uncomfortable feeling," I said to the courier of the Swiss visitors, "that this isn't a real Hungarian harvest festival, but one specially arranged."

"On my word of honor," he replied earnestly, "this is all the arranging there was. I wrote to the schoolmaster telling him we were coming and asking if they'd have the festival today. Then I offered to pay for the wine—a bottle for each of the men."

"What for the girls?" I demanded.

"A box of chocolates."

"Store candy," I said to myself. "Now I'm sure. I'm exceedingly grateful, but—oh, I would like to see a festival that wasn't fixed up in any way—the real thing!"

More than a year later, at the very end of my stay in Hungary, I was invited to an estate near Eger, to see a harvest festival simply done, without any arranging of any kind. We were just having our dessert when a lad shouted excitedly, "They're coming!" We all went out onto the veranda.

The procession of over two hundred people was headed by the foreman, a middle-aged man with long, curled-up mustachios. Next came his two assistants, the four wreath-bearers, the men and women and boys and girls

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belonging to the estate staff, plus the extras for the summer.

"Two wreaths, you notice," whispered my hostess. "One's for last year when we had no celebration. This was the peasants' idea. 'Ah, what a poor harvest that was,' they said, 'worse than for many years, with rust in the wheat and very low prices, so that we all wondered how we'd live through the winter. But the good God has remembered us this year and we have made a fine harvest, so we'll bring two wreaths, if you please.'"

The foreman made a short speech, the wreaths were presented with rhymes, my host responded and at the end of his little talk introduced me; and the peasants cried, "*Eljen! Eljen! Eljen!*" (three cheers) The wreaths were hung up in the corridor of the guest house across the garden. In some places last year's wreath is thrown away when the new one comes. Here they were kept. There were five in the guest house, for the five years since the land came into the hands of my host.

Then everybody went across the fields to a grassy place under some great trees, and there the dance was held. There are no gipsies in the nearby village, but some had been summoned from a town. The dance lasted till half past seven—the *csárdás* over and over, with a waltz put in occasionally. How hard they danced! There was little changing of partners; husbands danced with their wives, or if they changed off it was only for a few meas-

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ures, then back to the first arrangement; an engaged girl may dance only with her fiancé. The older women—that means from thirty on—don't dance at all, but find their pleasure in looking on.

I noticed two young men who were shouting, slapping their boots, whirling their partners about in the most hilarious way.

“Oh, no, they're not drunk,” my hostess hastened to explain in answer to the question in my glance, “those two are the village cutups and have their reputation to sustain. They are noisy—that's part of a Hungarian dance—but not drunk. You know, in consumption of wine—the total number of liters for the whole population—Hungary comes toward the very end of the list of nations.”

The supper was at five o'clock. The estate provided a whole sheep for the goulash, potatoes, onions, and of course paprikas; huge loaves of bread; and a cask of wine. When they were making the plans, the question came up, who should cook the supper? The names of several women were suggested. Up spoke one of the men:

“If the women cook the supper, it'll be no holiday for them. But our village has two men who were army cooks during the war. Let them do it!”

So it was a real holiday for the women. A holiday that the whole estate will talk about for months, dating other events from this most important one. A fortnight

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before the harvest festival, when a cousin came for a long visit. Two months after the festival, when Erzebet was married.

For me, too, a guest from far-away America, it was a very important event, one that I had long hoped to witness—a real Hungarian harvest festival!

## V.

## STEPHEN, KING AND SAINT.

If I hadn't known a little about Stephen before, I'm sure I'd have become interested in him after a few days in Budapest. Like Richard *Coeur de Lion* to the English, his statue seems to embody the very spirit of Hungary as he sits on his richly caparisoned horse, holding the double cross, looking out over the Vár.

His story is briefly told. His father was Duke Géza, the great-grandson of Árpád, chief of the Hungarians when they came into this land from the east. During his twenty-five years as leader he accomplished many important things. He united the Hungarians of Transylvania with those in central Hungary and for this united country he worked out a new political organization.

He and his wife accepted the Christian religion of the west, but this was for outward use only. Their son they deliberately educated in this new faith. Perhaps Géza's most important act was to establish relations with one of the powerful rulers of that day and marry his son to the

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Bavarian princess Gizella. Thus he forged the first ties between Hungary and the west, for he'd determined to rule over a western nation, not a loose federation of eastern tribes.

On the death of Géza in 997 Stephen succeeded him. He inherited a good army, a very rich land, and subjects as numerous as were the British; subjects moreover with a fair degree of culture—with their own language and their own art, living by agriculture and ranking high in some industries. Immediately a revolt against the new duke broke out. Stephen fought these rebels and won the victory.

Both father and son had a real gift for organization and during his long reign Stephen finished and perfected the work Géza had so well begun. The principal step in the making of the nation was the conversion of Hungary to Christianity, for the organization of the Catholic Church favored the development of one political power. What had been a gesture with his father, a matter of policy, was with Stephen entirely genuine—a thing of the heart.

Not by gentle persuasion, but by the sword he forced his faith upon the pagan tribes. When some of his subjects relapsed, he made war upon them vigorously. He appointed bishops and archbishops, giving them great estates taken from conquered chiefs. He established the Benedictines in the land. He brought his people to Ca-

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tholicism, and in doing this he brought all the resources of Catholicism to Hungary.

Building on Géza's foundation, he organized the new administration of the nation. Some of the details of local self-government remain today as that first king arranged them. He was a brilliant warrior. He was a wise legislator. He was a great builder of churches, especially on the frontier. As Christian king and medieval saint he set a good example.

So renowned was he through Europe that two little English princes were sent to his court for safety, in the time when the Danes were frequently ravaging the British coast. One of these boys died in Hungary and was buried there. The other married a relative of Stephen, Princess Agota, and had two children—known in history as Edgar the Atheling and St. Margaret of Scotland.

To add the last touch to his work, religious and political, Stephen sent an ambassador to Rome to present his homage to the Pope and ask from him a crown. Now there were three persons who had the right, in the Europe of that day, to promote a duke to be a king—the Holy Roman Emperor, the Pope, and the emperor at Constantinople. Applying to Rome was a shrewd move on Stephen's part, for it kept him free from political entanglements, made him independent of his neighbors on both east and west. It was wise and far-seeing diplomacy for the good of Hungary, for it meant that in the future



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she'd be not the most western of eastern lands, but the most eastern of western lands; and though on the map these may appear to be identical, they're not in reality.

The priest Astrik then went to Italy with messages from Stephen to the Pope, and returned with two gifts—a crown and the apostolic cross (with two horizontal pieces) which was to be borne before the king on state occasions, to show his right to the new title, "Apostolic King," which the Pope gave him. Stephen knelt to receive the papal blessing and the crown was placed on his head—the first coronation in Hungary.

So from the year 1001 to 1038 Stephen reigned in the land of the four rivers and the three mountains. There on the borderland of east and west he built up a strong kingdom which became a European country instead of a settlement of Asiatics. On his death he was buried in the cathedral he had built at Székesfehérvár.

I went for a day in Esztergom, the residence of the Primate of Hungary. I climbed the steep hill to the old fortress, the site of a fortress for more than a thousand years. The walls are partly of brick, partly of stone, with towers for sentinels and narrow slits for shooting through, and special openings for pouring down hot pitch.

Here, if we can believe the ancient legend, Stephen was born. There was a fortress here at that time, but leaders moved about constantly; the court of Duke Géza

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may have been here at Stephen's birth; at any rate, it must have been a room not unlike this—a low room with pillars supporting the ceiling; pillars that were once painted, for here and there are traces of red and blue.

The room is today a chapel, with frescoes showing events in the life of Stephen: a saint comes in a dream to the duchess and foretells the birth of her son; the baptism of Stephen; Astrik brings the crown from the Pope; Stephen gives his blessing to his son.

I went across to the cathedral, finely placed, at a sharp bend of the Danube. Stephen built a church here, but it was destroyed by the Turks. There were three large paintings I wanted to see—Stephen preaching to the heathen, christening two pagan women, offering his crown to the Virgin. The legend tells that in his dream he saw her bow and accept it, saying, "I will be the patron of Hungary."

Then I went into the treasury. What a marvelous collection that was—relics of many saints, vestments heavy with gold and jewels, bishops' staves and crosses and chalices, and a Gothic Calvary, a masterpiece of the medieval goldsmith's art, which belonged to Mátyás; "with over two hundreds jewels," declared the verger proudly.

But what I was most anxious to see was the apostolic cross, the Pope's gift to Stephen. I'd pictured it to myself about two feet long, like a cross carried at the

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head of the choir in Episcopal churches, for I knew it was borne before the king on state occasions. I listened patiently to the guide's account, all the details of this archbishop and that Primate. Not one word of the apostolic cross, which must surely be the most famous one in Hungary. Finally I asked about it.

"What—that?" In astonishment I pointed to an enameled tablet lying flat in the glass case. "Why, with those figures it looks like some medieval illustration. Is that the apostolic cross?"

"Yes, that is it."

"Really? The cross Astrik brought to St. Stephen?"

"Yes, madam."

I leaned over to study it. At the bottom was a crowded Crucifixion, perhaps four inches high. Above on one side the figure of a woman; I made out the name in Greek letters—Helena; and on the right Constantine. Between these two, embedded in the blue-gray enamel so that the surface was flat, was my cross, seven or eight inches long. At the intersection a small empty space; originally it contained a piece of the true cross.

If I couldn't see the crown of St. Stephen in Budapest, I did the next best thing—saw a duplicate of it in the bishop's palace in Kalocsa. The dear old priest who was showing us the library opened the case and took out the crown so that we could examine it closely.

"It's really two crowns put together," Katalin trans-

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lated his account, "the top part was sent to Stephen by the Pope and the lower was a present from the emperor of Byzantium to Géza I, in thanks for the especially kind treatment of his cousin who'd been a prisoner in Hungary. See how many jewels it has, some hanging on little chains; these dangles, ending in amethysts or rubies or those blue stones, are distinctly Byzantine. And where a pearl is missing in the original, it's missing here—for this is an exact copy. No, the jewels aren't particularly valuable, though some are large; but the enamels are lovely—Christ and the apostles, here you see the emperor who sent it and his son, and some saints."

"Tell me, why is the cross on top of the crown crooked?"

"There are half a dozen legends about it. One tells how Kossuth, starting into exile, buried the crown and the royal jewels; and when they were dug up, a workman's pickaxe pierced the lid of the chest and bent the cross. But—in old prints, long before the time of Kossuth, it slants to the left.

"And there's a story that once Stephen, wearing the crown, was riding along when his horse stumbled and he fell; and in the fall the cross was bent to one side. Well, between Stephen and Kossuth the crown's had lots of adventures; one king kept it in Vienna. Once it was put on exhibition in Nuremberg. It was taken to Prague. And once, to smuggle it past the enemies of a king, it traveled

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in a baby's carriage, upside down, with a spoon in it to pretend that it was only a porridge bowl.

"No one can be king of Hungary," she went on, "till it has rested on his head, and even the king wears it just once—at his coronation. Once a king had a duplicate of Stephen's crown made in Rome and was crowned with it; but the Hungarians looked at it and exclaimed, 'That is not the holy crown, it does not shine!' He had to be crowned again, when later he got possession of the authentic crown of Stephen."

"Didn't one of the Habsburgs refuse to be crowned with it, when he didn't wish to promise to observe your constitution?"

"Yes, and for ten years the people called Joseph II 'the king with the hat.' You know, we call Hungary 'the land of the holy crown,' or to say it briefly, 'crown land.' If you want to understand Hungarians, try to appreciate how we feel about the holy crown."

"But—I still don't understand why it's holy," I persisted.

Katalin frowned in her effort to explain.

"Because of the constitutional idea attached to it. The crown's the symbol of the whole nation. In feudal times when in other lands kings believed that the country belonged to them, the fundamentally constitutional Hungarians held the theory that all the land and all the power—that meant, the army and the public income—belonged not

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to the king but to the crown—that is, the nation. The coronation ceremony was the nation's giving to the king the right to use the possessions of the crown, according to the constitution. Now do you see? It's this constitutional idea attached to the Hungarian crown that made it so holy, and therefore more precious than other crowns. Do you know that noblemen were once called 'pearls of the holy crown?' "

Some weeks later I remarked to Ilonka, "I've become so interested in your first king, I think I must go to Székesfehérvár, just to see his tomb. Aren't some of the other kings of Hungary buried there, in the cathedral he built?"

"Were," she corrected, "not are. Yes, the Árpads were all buried in the crypt there, and some of the elected kings—until the Turks came into Hungary. They broke into the royal tombs, desecrated them, and left them in confusion. What would you see if you went down to Székesfehérvár? An empty crypt."

"But what about the right hand of St. Stephen?"

"When he was canonized—that was in 1083—his tomb was opened and there, amid the ashes, they found the right hand—intact; that unusual circumstance made the people look upon it as a relic, and all these years it's been regarded as a holy thing. When Genghis Khan and the Tartar hordes came in the thirteenth century, the royal family fled for safety to Dalmatia, carrying along with

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them various treasures, among others the right hand of St. Stephen. More than five hundred years later the city of Ragusa sent it back, to show their gratitude to Maria Theresa for some kindness."

"Where is it now, this right hand?"

"In Buda, in the chapel of the royal palace. Once a year, on the twentieth of August—that's St. Stephen's day, you know, our greatest holiday—it's taken from the Vár chapel and carried in procession through the streets of Buda, to the Coronation Church and back. You'll surely plan to be in the city then? But you ought to go up to the Vár and have a good look at it before, for you won't see anything on the holiday, there's always such a crowd."

I took her advice and went to the palace chapel. The altarpiece was a painting of Stephen. Directly back of the altar, in a little room built for it, I found the precious relic of the first king of Hungary. A small hand, black and shriveled, with the fingers bent under. Three bands of gold, set with pearls and rubies, held it in place in an elaborate Gothic case with glass sides.

All Budapest made preparations for the twentieth of August. Every few feet along the bridges were tall, white flagpoles bearing the Hungarian coat of arms and the tricolor of red and white and green. Every house put out a flag, or several. There was nearly always a breeze from the Danube, and it was a brave sight to see all those flags

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flying so gaily, in the bright sunshine or at dusk.

A whole week of celebrations. Races and competitions in sports. Railroad excursions from every town and village of Hungary brought crowds and crowds of people into the capital, and still more crowds and more. Some one sent me a ticket for the Coronation Church. The Foreign Office gave me a seat in a window, so that I could have a good view of the procession. But alas! no tickets were to be had for a performance at the theater, called *The Hungarian Bouquet*.

"Be sure you go early," Mária warned me. "The Vár is closed to traffic at half-past eight. What time is the procession? Nine o'clock—so early because it's August and sure to be very hot."

"I only hope it won't rain."

"Oh, I can promise you, it won't. It never rains on St. Stephen's day—never been known to. It is God's gift to Hungary."

Most unexpectedly I found that good fortune hadn't deserted me after all. Would I like, said a strange voice over the telephone, to see *The Hungarian Bouquet* this evening? Indeed, I would, but couldn't get tickets, and who was speaking, please? Baron M's secretary at the Foreign Office; a seat for me in his loge; they'd drive by for me at a quarter after seven. What luck!

"The actors tonight," the baroness said while we looked out at the packed house, "aren't the regular com-



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pany of the National Theater, but groups of peasants from various sections of our country. This performance is the idea of one Budapest man who wants to show Hungarians and visitors from everywhere something of the beautiful old costumes and customs; and—what's fully as important, rescue them before it's too late and they're lost forever; he wants to make the peasants realize that they have something fine and valuable, something that can't be replaced."

First, the national anthem. Then a group of perhaps thirty peasants danced a springing *csárdás*; the girl's hands on the man's shoulders, his hands at her waist, they took shuffling steps to the right, to the left, scarcely lifting their feet from the floor, then suddenly whirling madly round and round and round, his apron and her skirts and petticoats flaring out around them.

"It's quite an art," the baroness said, "to flirt your skirt from side to side, while you're doing the dignified, slow steps. It's considered a little coquettish."

Then came a wedding. The best man made a short speech to the girl's parents, evidently asking for the bride for his friend. From the little cottage at the side of the stage they brought out an old, old woman. He looked her over critically, turned her around, shook his head. No, no, she won't do! The father offered a broom. Is this maybe what you're looking for? No, no, protested the best man, he'd go himself and search; in half a second he

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was back, leading by the hand the bride, dressed in white, with a very elaborate headdress twenty inches high, glistening with pearls and beads of many colors. The wedding guests appeared, the first of them bearing the wedding cake, a huge affair with tall decorations of sugar and colored paper. The peasant orchestra at one corner of the stage played for the wedding dance. One of the girls left the *csárdás* to give the leader a bottle of wine.

"That's a very Hungarian touch," the baron commented.

There was a night scene, with stars showing in the backdrop and peasants singing around the fire. Six couples from Kalocsa did a singing game, the tempo changing with the different verses of the song. There was a ten-minute harvest festival where the men carried in the harvest wreath and their tools, decked with flowers and ribbons. A hundred and fifty boys and girls sang, unaccompanied, with a lad of twelve conducting.

One number was given by nine old men.

"Old men," the baron translated, "for they're all over forty. None of them is poor. We're not to think they came to Budapest for the money. Each of the nine owns a hundred *hold* of land—or more."

They did a soldiers' dance, with a bit of singing. When we applauded heartily, two of them danced an encore. Holding their black felt hats, they passed them skillfully, quickly, under their knees, right, left, then

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right, left, as they jumped. One stopped and shook his head.

"I can't keep it up like my comrade. I've five bullets in my leg, since the war."

The next scene was an inn on the Hortobágy, where *csikós* and herdsmen had dropped in to spend an evening. Some sat at the table drinking, some sang, two men cracked their long whips. The shepherds danced over and around their staves. Another shepherd played a quaint, sad tune on his pipe. Eight men danced over crossed sticks, slow steps alternating with quick.

"It's a competition," the baron explained. "The point is not to touch the sticks with your foot—something like the Scottish sword dance."

The different numbers were simple, not too much rehearsed and made artificial. Now and then a naive touch, as when a man took out a colored handkerchief and mopped his bald head. Singing and dancing were alike good. But it was the costumes that took my breath away. A sea of colors! and such brilliant color!

There were skirts of flowered material, of velvet in plain colors—red, mauve, purple, orange, green, blue—ruffled skirts and pleated skirts, with a line of color at the bottom. There were headdresses with many ribbons hanging down the back, or with beads and sequins—blue, white, gold—or with embroidery on black, on white. The Kalocsa girls looked like a flower garden in midsummer,

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with flowers embroidered on their blouses, front and back and sleeves, and all over their aprons.

Some of the men had black aprons with solid embroidery two feet up, or even more, in the gayest colors; some had aprons with open-work embroidery and lace; or of red figured material, with one corner tucked in at the belt, so that they looked like triangles. Some had embroidered shirts, with sleeves two meters wide; some had black velvet vests, or green, much embroidered, or red, or black coats with velvet sleeves.

How describe them all? The Hungarian peasant puts side by side colors that are strikingly in contrast, but never crude. The women folk lavish embroidery on their garments, for in the long winter there is little to do. And a costume lasts for years.

The twentieth of August came, a fine day, as Mária had foretold, but hot in the sun. As I drove over the Chain Bridge and up the zigzag road to the Vár, I saw crowds and crowds of people, from beggars to noblemen, from boy scouts to nuns in blue, with wide white headdresses like wings. Girls were selling religious pictures and brooches. Men offered ices and glass mugs of cold water. A group of mounted police trotted by, all on gray horses with red saddle blankets. From windows and balconies hung lovely oriental rugs. Flags everywhere, red and white and green.

So many groups were coming and going in front of the Foreign Office that I scarcely realized when the actual

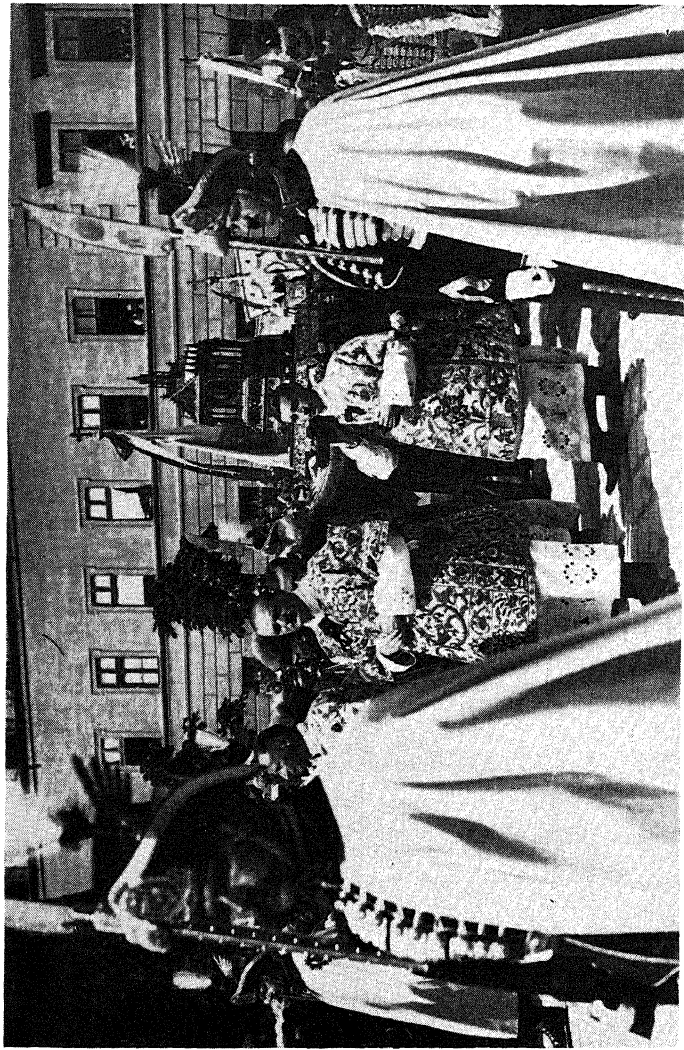
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procession began. There was no hullabaloo, no announcement of any kind, no band at the head, not even a line of policemen. Very quietly came the palace guards, in their summer uniform of khaki coats and white trousers, with tall halberds and gleaming helmets. Then a dozen groups of peasants whom I'd seen at the National Theater. A platoon of soldiers in khaki and black, all of whom had won decorations in the war, and a group of Reserve officers. Nuns in black and white, in black, in blue and white, with elaborately pleated wimples or tiny bows under their chins.

Then the priests—young priests in plain black robes with white collar tabs; older priests in surplices, lace half way up or more; altar boys in red or blue; Franciscans in sandals.

And then a group that made me catch my breath. Had they strayed into present-day Buda from the court of Mátyás? or come to life from some medieval book? Six musicians, half with trumpets, half with trombones, dressed in gray robes, coming to the knee, with bands of green or blue; tunics of burnt orange; lavender stockings and high brown boots with pointed toes; caps of blue velvet, or bordeaux.

More and more priests escorting the Papal Legate who was dressed in purple, with a long train—oh! very long, carried by two priests; and the Primate of Hungary, with ermine cape and long train of scarlet, wearing a tiny cap



*Magyar Film Iroda*  
THE RELIC OF ST. STEPHEN IS CARRIED IN A GREAT PROCESSION ON AUGUST 20TH



*Magyar Film Iroda*

HUNGARIAN MAGNATES IN GALA COSTUME ON ST. STEPHEN'S DAY

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and carrying the four-cornered red cardinal's cap. Walking quite alone, the Regent of Hungary in the uniform of a naval officer, a white sailor's cap in his hand.

"There are the two archdukes—the Habsburgs, you know," my neighbor announced excitedly. "Archduke Joseph's the older one, in the coat of white brocade, and his son's in red—isn't he handsome? They are both so popular, for they were born in Budapest and they're far more Hungarian than Austrian in feeling."

"What a picture the next group make, all on white horses—scarlet uniforms with tight-fitting trousers and high yellow boots, long white capes and gold helmets with tall aigrettes. Who are they?"

"The Guardians of the Crown. It's a great honor to belong to that order. But see—here is the Holy Right Hand."

Carried on the shoulders of four priests in richly embroidered and bejeweled robes came the glass tabernacle I'd already seen in the royal chapel. It rested on a platform covered with white satin, embroidered with gold and crimson. The very poles were wrapped in red velvet. Other priests in similarly gorgeous robes walked beside it, ready to change off with the bearers.

On both sides of the relic and many rows behind it came the Hungarian magnates in their gala costumes of velvet and satin. Never two alike; red and black, blue trimmed with astrakan, all black, or black and silver, red



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with soft gray fur and blue trousers, green with mink, blue with much gold braiding and sable. Top boots with gold-edged spurs. Round caps with bands of rich fur and tall plumes pinned on with a great brooch. Coats richly braided, thrown around the shoulders so that they give the effect of capes, held in place by heavy jeweled chains. Buttons of gold or diamonds, or enameled. A golden saber, in a golden belt studded with semi-precious stones. Such clothes, handed down from father to son and grandson, show a touch of orientalism in the Hungarians.

Velvets and furs for the twentieth of August? Why, during all the years they've been celebrating this day, has no one worked out a costume, for peasants as well as for magnates, appropriate to August?

"It's the traditional costume," Ilonka said seriously when later I put this question. "No one would think of changing it to suit the weather. Traditions are very strong in Hungary—they don't alter—ever!"

It was a religious procession and a patriotic procession combined. I saw not one person laughing or joking. Every face was serious and earnest. A holiday in Hungary goes back to the original meaning and is indeed a holy day.

The twentieth of August is the greatest day in Hungary. Interesting, isn't it, that it has nothing to do with any national event, with a hero of some struggle for liberty, with a revolution, but honors the first king who

## STEPHEN, KING AND SAINT

made the nation Christian—in that long-ago year 1001?

When the procession had passed the Foreign Office, I slipped out, down a side street, and slowly made my way to the Coronation Church. The great doors at the west end were open. Down the steps and all along the center aisle stood the palace guards and the Guardians of the Crown, picturesque in their scarlet and white.

I'd seen the church before, dim and quiet, with a few candles flickering here and there. Now it was blazing with lights and crowded with people. This is how it must have looked in medieval times—on that day when Hunyadi came to give thanks for his victory over the Turks, or perhaps at the wedding of Beatrice of Aragon to King Mátyás. Yes, the Coronation Church needed many persons in gorgeous costumes, the great doors flung open for the formal entrance of Regent and Papal Legate, to receive the relic of St. Stephen.

That evening we watched the fireworks on the Gellért hill, at first from a hotel balcony, then from the Corso, the wide promenade by the Danube. Every few minutes a loud-speaker overhead announced the next piece, often with some little joke that caused a hearty laugh. It was good to mix with the Hungarian crowd for half an hour and hear the oh's and ah's when the tricolor blazed for a minute in the sky, when the crown of St. Stephen shone with all its gold and jewels, when flower pots blossomed magically with green leaves and blooms of white and red.

## HUNGARY, LAND OF CONTRASTS

Last of all came the surprise of the evening, which made the throng gasp with amazement. A cascade, announced as Niagara Falls, in glistening, white fire, and the mist, a smoke screen set off from boats anchored in the river. Niagara Falls, the climax of that Hungarian holiday!

## VI.

## TWO PILGRIMAGES

"This morning Mr. Herczeg telephoned—you remember, the novelist you met Thursday at tea?—and said he'd been thinking of something he could do for you, to help you see Hungary, and now he has a plan—Pannonhalma."

"I know I'm frightfully ignorant, but who or what is Pannonhalma?"

"Why should foreigners know? It's a monastery, the oldest in Hungary, and perhaps the most interesting. I'll go along with you. It's just a comfortable day's trip and back to Budapest in the evening. We're to be guests of the abbot. Yes? What day suits you?"

"Oh, Margit," I exclaimed, "I've seen medieval monasteries, but I've never been a guest in one. It'll be thrilling. Tuesday? Splendid."

After a two-hour ride we changed to a little local train. Long, long before we arrived at the tiny station of Pannonhalma we could see the towers of the monastery,

## HUNGARY, LAND OF CONTRASTS

for it was built by the Benedictines who almost always chose a site on a hilltop. Was it for defense? or for the view? or for a more practical reason, I wondered later when I heard the story of how they'd drained the marshes here, as far as we could see, and had made this enormous fertile plain.

It was a long drive, up a steep hill. Now and then I caught a glimpse of the facade of the church, mosaic with a gold background that caught the light and showed far off. Think of the labor of bringing all the stone for building church and cloisters and school, and the road besides. We went through a wide gateway, past a statue of Astrik who, in Stephen's time, was abbot here.

"Astrik?" I tried to remember where I'd heard the name. "He brought the crown from the Pope to Stephen?"

"Yes," warned Margit, "but don't know too much—the monks will enjoy telling you."

The housemaster, who might have come from any Budapest apartment building, conducted us to one of the guest rooms. It was simply furnished, about like the average hotel bedroom in a Hungarian town. We freshened up and soon luncheon was announced.

I had hoped we'd dine in the refectory. Not at Pannonhalma! No woman has ever crossed the threshold in almost a thousand years; and who was I that the good Benedictines should break rules for me?

## TWO PILGRIMAGES

The abbot was away, we learned at luncheon, and his second in command, the master of the cellars, was our host. He might have walked out of some old painting, so typical was he, very fat and very jolly, with a fund of merry jokes and stories.

The dinner? Soup with noodles; meat with gravy, potatoes and macaroni; apricots and peaches from the monastery garden; and of course Pannonhalma wine, three kinds.

Our waiter wasn't a monk, but might have hailed from any cafe on the Corso. There are no lay brothers in the monastery, but fifteen outsiders, men and women servants, who look after the needs of the eighty monks.

From the luncheon talk and from our tour over the monastery I learned the story of Pannonhalma. The Benedictines in Hungary go back not to Stephen, but to his father who invited them to come into the country. It was Stephen who gave them this tract of land and built the first church here. But the monastery has been rebuilt or added to so often that it now boasts four styles of architecture and has preserved only a part of the walls of Stephen's church.

We went down to see the crypt chapel, with low vaulted ceiling and heavy columns, their capitals all different, and windows built as in a fortress. We saw the large church and the upstairs winter chapel. In the sacristy the choicest vestments had been brought out for us to

## HUNGARY, LAND OF CONTRASTS

exclaim over. We loitered in the cloisters to enjoy the garden—there were several gardens on different levels; we'd go upstairs or down and suddenly come out into a hillside garden, gay with flowers.

Our monk put up his arm and barred the door of the refectory, but he did let us stand at the threshold and look in. I caught only glimpses of the frescoes, the work of some unknown Italian.

"They're all connected with eating," he commented with a smile, "Herodias dancing at Herod's feast, an angel bringing food to Daniel in the lion's den, Satan tempting Christ to change stones into bread, the feast of Belshazzar for a thousand of his lords, and the miracle of St. Benedict when some monks, angry at his strict rule, tried to poison him—but he changed the wine into a fangless serpent."

"This is called the finest baroque room in Hungary. Notice the reader's desk, up those few steps, by the center window. He says," Margit translated, "that formerly a monk read during meals, every day, but now only on Fridays."

During the reign of Joseph II the abbey lost much of its wealth and this building was confiscated; but Francis I gave it back to the monks and has been honored with a marble statue in the modern library—yet it can't be so very new, for it has no heat and can't be used all winter.

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The monastery's patron saint is St. Martin who was—maybe—born near Pannonhalma. But it wasn't of Martin nor of Benedict that I found myself thinking most, but of Stephen. He was present at the dedication of that first church. He came on a visit here with his son, St. Imre; there's a fresco of their arrival in the winter chapel. And in the abbot's room our monk opened a safe and showed us their greatest treasures—the charter of Pannonhalma, which Stephen himself signed; not a legend that, for it says so in the text which has some Hungarian words mixed in with the Latin; and the mantle of Stephen.

“But the one in Budapest,” I questioned, just as if I'd seen it myself, “isn't that the real coronation mantle?”

“Yes. Historians don't all agree, but we think this one, made by the monks here, was the pattern and the other was made after it. Here all the figures are painted on the cloth; the one in Budapest is woven. It's known as the coronation mantle and used as such now, but of course it wasn't Stephen's coronation robe, for its date is 1031.

“Come close up and see the figures. Here in the center is Christ with some angels. The next row is prophets, then apostles, with an outer row of martyrs, each semicircle getting larger. Probably there was still another row originally—virgins. And in the border a hunting scene.”

I bent over the glass to study this famous mantle.



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The background is bluish, the figures in yellow, outlined in brown. In many places it's been mended with patches of red satin, put on with yellow stitches; so much patching that now it's very colorful.

We hurried through the museum and drove down to the village that clusters at the foot of that steep hill, to see the wine cellars. Far back into the hillside they run, thirteen dark, mysterious passages, with rounded ceilings of brick. If put all in one line they'd reach more than half a kilometer. Here the famous wines of the abbey are stored in huge casks, each proudly bearing its date.

The cellarman, in long white smock, brought a glass tube about thirty inches long, swelling out at the top into a sort of flask, five inches across. Margit who is something of a connoisseur in wines, would say the name of one and we'd walk along to that cask. The man climbed up three or four steps till he was level with the top of the cask, inserted the tube, put his mouth over the end and sucked out the air, and suddenly the wine rushed up into the glass; when there was enough, he closed the tube with two fingers. A slight movement of his hand let the wine flow into our glasses.

"Is that the medieval way?" I asked Margit in English.

"I don't know, why?"

"Well—" I hesitated, "well, it's not very hygienic, is it?"

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"Drink, my dear," she laughed, "and forget your hygiene. The wine itself is a disinfectant, you know, for it has such a high percentage of alcohol."

The monk with us had brought along some slices of bread. We walked on and on through the cellars, sampling here and there, nibbling the dry bread so that we could taste the better. I tried three kinds and thought, What a pity that some of my New York friends can't change places with me now! Margit had—I don't know how many, I lost count after eight.

We bade the cellarman goodbye and drove on to the station, with many a backward look to the monastery on the hill, with its dark, gray stone chapel and modern wings, plastered in cream color, and the facade gleaming in the sunlight.

Benedict, Martin, Astrik, Stephen—Pannonhalma!

I telephoned the Foreign Office. Count T. was out of the city.

I called the tourist division of the Hungarian railroads.

"Good morning, what can I do for you? Oh, I'm so sorry, I can't possibly tomorrow. Guests from London. But you won't have any difficulty finding some one."

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I tried a third time. Elizabeth was not in the city. Eva was ill.

In despair I appealed to my landlady.

"I want to go to Budaörs tomorrow. It's Corpus Christi day and I've just heard about the celebration there. I must go—it's frightfully important. All my friends have other plans and I can't go alone. Can't you suggest something?"

Madame thought for a moment and rang the bell.

"We will consult Marie."

She and the cook talked back and forth. Marie looked on anxiously while the gist of their conference was translated.

"The housemaster's helper comes from Budaörs. His mother'll look after you, she is German. Marie's seen the carpet and says you must not miss it."

We heard her calling down to the courtyard, "Pauli, Pauli!" Presently she returned, her broad face beaming, her eyes bright with success.

"Pauli says yes, the English lady must go by autobus from the Francis Joseph bridge. His old mother is Frau Thoma, she lives near the school, number 122. The procession goes in front of their house. They'll tell you about everything."

The next morning I started off at seven, got the last seat in the bus, and journeyed west from the capital to this village called Budaörs. Half way there, the road be-

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came crowded with groups of peasants on foot—little girls in white, older boys with a religious picture on their banner. At the edge of the village we drove under an arch of green, with many flowers. I asked my way to the school, found the Thoma house, and introduced myself as coming from Muzeum Street in Pest.

“Is Pauli coming?” interrupted the old mother. “Oh, I do so want him to come!”

“Yes, later on. He sent me early to see the procession.”

“Nine o’clock it starts. You must see the carpet first. I’ll send some one for my other son.”

In a few minutes I started off with Pauli’s brother Istvan.

“You’ve seen a Corpus Christi procession before?”

“Yes, several times, but not in Hungary.”

“Then you know about the four altars where the procession stops? The special thing we have in Budaörs is the carpet. No other place in Hungary has it, no other place in all the world.”

In front of the Thoma house women and girls were on their hands and knees doing the last fifteen minutes’ work. I could see how it would look—a carpet made of flower petals, as wide as the road—here about four meters, Istvan thought, measuring with his eyes; a striped carpet, each row made of petals of one color. I watched a group of girls—from this basket handfuls of green leaves for

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the border, from the next daisies, from another red poppy petals, then pale blue. I counted the stripes, each about three inches wide—thirty-four; green, white, lavender, yellow, red, white, blue, and so on. In some places the stripes were as wide as ten inches, and fewer in proportion.

The carpet began at the village church, turned to the left in a rough half circle, then up the main street, which happens to be divided into two roads by a line of trees; along one side, turn, back on the other to the church; the same line of march that's been followed for years.

"Where do you get so many flowers? And who does all the work?"

"Each family makes the carpet in front of their own house, with some help from friends who don't live where the procession passes. It's really the work of the whole village. We began picking flowers last Sunday after mass. Nine-tenths of them are wild flowers, only a few come from Budaörs gardens. Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, every one goes into the fields and picks—men and women, boys and girls, even little tots. Some flowers you can get any quantity of without going far. But we have to walk two hours to find the blue ones. Some grow on the hillsides, picking them's hard work. Some come from distant meadows. One kind in a basket—very systematic. At night when we come home the flowers are put in cellars. Notice how fresh they look."

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"And then," I prompted him, "this morning you all—"

"We men got up at three o'clock to sweep the street—clean, perfectly clean—that's our part of Corpus Christi day; and soon after four the girls and women began putting the petals down to make the carpet. It's not so difficult as you think—watch here a moment—a handful of rose petals, trail them along, straighten the edges with your hands, and then another."

"But it must be back-breaking," I murmured to myself.

We hurried along to see the outdoor altars. They were built up on a framework, the outside covered with green leaves—oak or evergreen. Inside the walls were a mass of flowers. One was entirely covered with small wreaths, about five inches in diameter, made of corn flowers and daisies, so that the effect was a little chapel frescoed in blue and white and gold. There were many candles and many religious pictures. There were rugs, and in one place silk curtains. At each altar the stripes of the floral carpet curved in.

The last few minutes before nine o'clock the men were pressed into service for the final meters of the carpet. One of them had thought out a labor-saving device. He'd nailed together four strips of wood to make an oblong, as wide as one strip—this was in a section of very wide stripes. Into this shallow framework he put double handfuls of petals, one after another, very quickly, with-

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out having to stop to straighten the edges, to move some over if two colors intermingled. Would he, I wondered, patent his scheme and next year all Budaörs'll make a section of carpet in twenty minutes? Not in Hungary. I feel sure they'll continue to make it in the traditional way.

In the distance we heard the band playing. The guest of honor—the Papal Legate—had arrived and was being escorted to the church. We hurried back to the Thoma house.

Heading the procession came the firemen of Budaörs, and the gendarmes with feathers in their helmets and three oak leaves. Then little boys carrying a statuette of Christ, on a platform banked with flowers; a group of little girls, each wearing a religious medal on a red ribbon, which gave them the effect of a uniform; boy scouts in khaki; older girls in black frocks and white aprons, with beaded headdresses and blue ribbons hanging far down in the back.

A pause and the Budaörs band appeared; nuns in navy blue, with white pleated bibs and wide white caps; girls in white and yellow; older women in black, with pleated white aprons, carrying lighted candles enclosed in glass. And then, crowding in closer and closer, a group of priests, the cross bearer, incense boys and the Papal Legate with the Host. The guard of honor, walking on both sides of the baldachin that protected the



*Bresscy*

IN BUDAÓRS THE CORPUS CHRISTI PROCESSION PASSES OVER A FLORAL CARPET





YOUNG PEOPLE DANCE OUT OF DOORS IN A CIRCLE DANCE OR THE NATIONAL CSÁRDÁS

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Host, was a dozen Budaörs soldiers, in black felt hats with chin straps, turned up sharply in the back, with a bunch of flowers and two long streamers of bright pink ribbon.

Following the priests came a great crowd, completely filling the street, pushing in as close as ever they could—the men first, then the women. Guided by nuns and school teachers, the first groups had kept to the sides of the road, stepping on the floral carpet only a tiny bit at the edges, so that it really looked splendid when the Host passed. But the throng had no thought for anything but getting up close, to hear all they could. When they had gone by, there was little left of those beautiful stripes, so painstakingly placed and straightened by so many loving hands. Lavender, white, green, red—a trace of color here and there in the dust.

The Budaörs costume is perhaps the most practical I saw in Hungary. The married women were all in black, plain or with fine white dots. They wore dark blue or black headkerchiefs. I saw a few younger women in light blue kerchiefs, and one in light green. But they were all of silk and cost, Pauli told me, from twelve to fifteen *pengös*. Every Budaörs woman wore an apron of shiny cloth, black or dark blue; a very full skirt; light blue stockings; and black velvet slippers—something like pumps. The men's coats had black velvet collars. For Budaörs is a village of very rich peasants and they don't

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have to economize on quality in their wardrobes.

Not only are they rich, they are very religious. Every one took part in the singing. I saw many persons, men and women alike, following in their prayer books the reading of the Gospels. I saw no one laughing or chatting. Corpus Christi is a very serious business for Budaörs.

Istvan and I turned back to his mother's house, walking carelessly now over the remnants of the carpet. I asked about the time of the bus back to the city.

"Surely you're staying for the Passion?"

"What is that?"

"A play—this afternoon—madam must stay—a play, the Passion of Christ," Istvan and Pauli interrupted one another as they tried to tell me. "Like Oberammergau, you ask? Well, something like," they conceded and added proudly, "but this is Budaörs' own. The school-master wrote it and all the actors live here in the village."

"Where do they give it?"

"Up there," pointing to the crest of the hill enclosing the valley on the north. "You see the hermit's cross? It's close by."

Quickly they settled that I was to stay. I ran into the house and asked their mother, who was bending over the kitchen stove, if I could have dinner with them, but she wasn't to do anything extra, just give me what they

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were having; otherwise I'd have to go to the *csárda* (inn). She didn't know, when she cordially agreed to an unexpected guest, that I would insist on paying.

This was the menu: soup—delicious; meat with tomato sauce; another meat course with gravy; cake with icing; cup cakes with raisins; Budaörs wine. I had a fresh plate for each dish. Once I heard suspicious sounds of splashing water behind me, but I managed not to turn round, so whether it was always the same plate or not I cannot say.

What an insight into peasant life I had during that meal! Frau Thoma is a widow and owns four fields; two are vineyards (Budaörs wine is famous), one is planted in maize, the last in other crops.

"Who does the work in your four fields," I asked, "now that Istvan is married and has his own work to do and Pauli has a job in the city?"

"I do," she said simply.

"How many years have you?"

"Two and sixty," was the prompt reply and then she added very proudly, "and next April I shall have three and sixty."

When I refused another helping of the roast and asked how many times a week she had meat, she stared at me in amazement.

"Why—why, I'm never here for dinner except on Sundays. All the week long I'm in my fields for the whole

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day, and I just take some bread along for my dinner."

I wondered if I'd be doing that much when I have three and sixty years. No, no, she wouldn't allow me to wipe the dishes. Istvan would be coming in ten minutes and I must rest, for it'd be a hard climb up to the Passion. And it was—an exceedingly hard climb.

We went a little out of our way to see their wine cellar. It's eighty or a hundred years old, Pauli wasn't sure exactly, and was made right in the hillside, with the far end of solid rock. How delightfully cool it was inside! Istvan opened a cask, drew the dark red wine up into a long glass tube, and offered me a sample of his Budaörs wine. I shut my eyes, tried not to think of germs, and drank.

Up still steeper paths we scrambled. Then near the ticket office I had an idea. Neither of them had seen the performance, though of course they'd been hearing of it for months past; why not invite them to go with me? Pretending that I couldn't understand what it was all about, unless they'd explain it to me, I persuaded them to be my guests and the three of us found places in the center, about half way back.

Pauli consulted one of his friends, an assistant stage manager, to make sure we'd chosen rightly. Then he hunted up another, to come and be introduced to me and explain the stage.

"It has seven parts. Start at the left, madam—the

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pool of Bethesda, the house of Caiaphas—you know who he was?—the house for the Last Supper, the home of Jairus, a city gate, the temple, and Pilate's house."

We sat there in the hot Hungarian sunshine on a backless bench. Some of the spectators sat on the grass on the hillside, reminding me of Bible times. The long slope ran gently down to the narrow strip of valley where the seven buildings made a street in Jerusalem, and behind the stage the hill rose sharply, treeless, to an irregular crest outlined starkly against the blue, blue Hungarian sky. While we waited, my guests told me about this community play.

"Budaörs has between nine and ten thousand people. Last year a company was formed and money collected—twenty-five thousand *pengös* altogether. You see, they must pay something for the use of the ground. They must buy the costumes. They had to build the stage and the seats. And all the little unexpected expenses besides. No," Istvan shook his head sagely, "twenty-five thousand was none too much."

"Who wrote the play?"

"Our school teacher—he wrote it and has managed the rehearsals—in fact, the whole thing. Ah, they're beginning!"

Music from a hidden orchestra. Then a short speech in Hungarian, probably explaining what Pauli and Istvan had been telling me. Then a group of Roman soldiers

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marched down a street in Jerusalem and suddenly I was transported to Palestine. Three girls with water jars on their shoulders, dressed in red, yellow, pink, came leisurely from one of the side streets. A lame man with a rude crutch stopped by the pool of Bethesda. A group approached slowly, carrying a man on a stretcher.

From that first miracle to the scene in the upper room where Christ appeared to His disciples, there were all the time people coming and going through the city gate, up and down this main street of Jerusalem—men, women, children too, occasionally a woman with a child in her arms. All Jerusalem wasn't silent, watching, listening when the man was healed at the pool of Bethesda, when Jesus blessed the children, when the money-changers were driven from the temple, but ordinary, every-day life was going on.

"This is the way it must have been," I thought over and over.

One after another the different scenes were given, with a unity of action that was lacking at Oberammergau in 1930, where tableaux from the Old Testament were continually interpolated, where the Chorus explained, but by their very appearance interrupted the story.

The costumes were extremely simple, but so colorful. Striped headdresses and surcoats. Roman soldiers in red tunics and yellow coats. The high priest in a blue robe over white, with a white headdress of peculiar shape.

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The action changed from one part of the stage to another, but it was always in the open. The house of Jairus had three windows and the curtains were pulled back so that we could see the girl lying on the bed, the women mourning, then the entrance of Jesus and the rejoicing when she was brought back to life. For the Last Supper the doors of the house slid slowly back, showing the long table set with silver plates and one tall silver cup. The plotting of the Jews went on in the street, in the temple court, at the house of Caiaphas. To me, there to look rather than to hear, this plotting seemed overlong.

There were some very dramatic touches, or rather dramatic combinations. The witnesses before the Sanhedrin, who told what Jesus said about rebuilding the temple in three days, were the blind man we'd seen at the roadside and the cripple healed by Bethesda's pool. It was during a meeting of the plotters, while chanting sounded from the temple, that Christ entered, riding on an ass, coming down the hill at the left, to be greeted by the hosannas of the crowd; but the mob didn't number eight hundred, nor were they too well drilled.

When Judas received the thirty pieces of silver, he took it out of the money bag and counted it, piece by piece, while Jesus and His disciples were going half-way up the hill to Gethsemane. And the most dramatic touch of all, He took up His cross and was carrying it as easily as did the two thieves, until He met His mother and fell



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under its weight. Acting—but most convincing acting.

The three crosses were lifted into place on the crest of the hill, so that we saw them sharply silhouetted against the sky. Across the front of the stage came Judas, alone, a rope in his hand. At Calvary there was only a little group of onlookers—a few soldiers, a few friends. Again I had a sudden realization that this was the way it really happened—so simply; no throng of supers; no commercialism. Probably Oberammergau was like this, say a century ago?

Lovingly the body of Christ was taken down and carried by four men to the tomb near by. Soldiers took the bodies of the thieves. Stark against the evening sky the three crosses remained, for by this time it was after seven. Dressed in white now, Jesus blessed the disciples and the women, assembled in the upper room. The doors slowly closed.

Istvan and Pauli made very few comments. So-and-so's daughter, they said when we saw the room in the house of Jairus. Did I know the story, when the Jews were about to stone the woman in the temple court, and one by one slipped away when Christ stooped and wrote on the ground? Pilate—why, it's Kovacs Béla!

"The officer's horse doesn't like the smell of the ass," Pauli whispered with a smile when the Roman captain had trouble with his mount on the steep hillside.

Slowly, as if loath to go, the three or four thousand

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persons in the audience went down the slope to the street in Jerusalem and toward the gate. Motors and carriages couldn't come up to the entrance, the hill was far too steep. We inched our way down the narrow path. It was impossible to hurry, as there wasn't room to pass.

Once down on fairly level ground, Pauli raced on ahead to secure me a seat in the motor bus. But others had had the same idea and he found not even standing room. Suddenly I felt tired out.

"You have a return ticket? There's the autobus manager. We'll speak to him."

Though I caught a few words—American, lady, ticket—I thought it was hopeless. How to get back to Budapest? But Pauli returned with his face beaming.

"You will wait five minutes, please? The manager's own car will be here. He'll send you back with two other ladies."

After the jolty, crowded bus it seemed splendid to drive back in a limousine in real comfort.

"Goodbye, and thank you over and over," I called to Istvan and Pauli.

"Madam, it is for us to thank you."

Later Marie told me that for days and days Pauli boasted of entertaining me for luncheon in Budaörs and taking me to the Passion Play.

## VII

## BY THE WATERS OF BALATON

The end of August.

It was hot in Budapest.

Would I, Luisa telephoned, like to go down to Balaton for a long weekend? At half-past one we met at the station. It was hot at the ticket office, stiflingly hot in the train, crowded with weekenders.

Our route lay south and west from the capital, across flat, prairie land where peasants were threshing. After two hours a delightful breeze swept suddenly through the compartment, not a tantalizing one that lasted only a minute, but a steady breeze like the seaside's.

"We're getting close to Balaton," Luisa explained. "The rest of the journey'll be pleasant, for the train skirts the lake all the way."

This was the Saturday afternoon express to Balaton, making no stops, but once at the lake the stops were frequent. Such attractive stations, with wicker chairs and settees, with cushions covered with gay, striped

## BY THE WATERS OF BALATON

peasant textiles, emphasizing at the beginning of our stay that this was a summer resort. There were flowers blooming everywhere and the very architecture of the stations suggested summer villas. Every platform was crowded with people, come to meet their weekend guests, and sunburned kiddies running to greet their fathers.

Balaton, a long lake—fifty-one miles—the largest lake in central Europe, and narrow—at the widest only a mile and a half—is fringed with two dozen resorts, and after visiting ten of them I found it impossible to decide which was the loveliest. It's no recent discovery that the climate here is suitable for a health resort, for many hotels and white villas date back to the '80's. Doctors say Balaton's a marvelous place for children, especially anæmic youngsters, who benefit by something magic in the air, just as they do at the seashore. Certainly the looks of every child were a splendid advertisement.

There are good motor roads joining the different resorts, but it's pleasanter to go by the little steamers that ply up and down and across the lake. There are sailboats too; enough privately owned boats to warrant having a fashionable boatclub. But I was warned not to set sail before asking the advice of an old Balaton fisherman; for sudden storms sweep across the lake, when a sailboat becomes quite unmanageable, and it's so dangerous that many persons have been drowned. I longed to see a really good storm at Balaton, but unfortunately

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none came along, during our happy weekend at the lake.

What was there to do, besides swimming and loafing, at a summer resort in Hungary? Every place had a promenade, a long, straight stretch of ground, planted with rows of great chestnut trees. Here after the morning swim and sunbath, and late in the afternoon, all the people gathered and strolled up and down. Sometimes there was music. We would stop at a spring for a glass of mineral water. For all its many springs, Budapest has no monopoly of healing waters in Hungary. Springs seem to be everywhere.

Every day, no matter in which place we were, we went down to the lake to see the sunset. That's one of the treasures of Hungary, not to be forgotten—the sunset at Balaton. Such cloud effects, such soft pastel colors in the sky and reflected in the lake. Such a slow, marvelous change from crimson to lavender, from gold to a silvery gray, while the sky gradually became the deepest of deep blues and stars came out till the milky way showed up more plainly than I'd ever seen it before. Sunset at Balaton, and little groups of people watching sky and clouds and reflections, hushed by the beauty everywhere about them. It was well worth the hot train ride, just to see one sunset at Balatonföldvár or Balatonalmádi.

Sunday we went to the Biological Institute at Tihany, a fascinating place even to a layman. With so much

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clamoring to be done in the educational field, I thought it splendid that Hungary would—not desire to, but actually did find the money to build and equip such an institute for scientific research. There are laboratories and living quarters for thirty workers. We were introduced to students and professors from Switzerland, Germany and England, there for the summer; the staff of ten works throughout the year.

From the lake or from the promontory above, the Institute and its neighbors on either side—a small hotel and a Habsburg villa—made an attractive picture, for they were planned by the same architect, though not precisely identical in style.

From the Institute we climbed up a zigzag path to the famous abbey of Tihany. It's one of the Benedictine monasteries and here, as at Pannonhalma, they built at the top of a steep hill. They've owned this property since the twelfth century; indeed at one time the whole peninsula belonged to the abbey. It was a fortress church in the old days, one of the few place in Hungary never captured by the Turks; they camped on the other side of the lake and came across to Tihany on the ice to make a raid.

Today this is a place where the Benedictines come to rest and to pass their last years in quiet; but on one occasion the abbey was a refuge for quite different guests.

In October of 1921 the last of the Habsburg sovereigns

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tried to regain his throne and entered the country by airplane. The train bearing his party to Budapest was stopped by torn up railroad tracks. Soon they were prisoners of the Allies and were interned here at Tihany.

Charles IV and Zita, king and queen, Habsburgs, they arrived with the smallest of retinues. We went into the little sitting room the monks gave up to them. The king had the room next, the one with the red velvet cover on the bed. The queen's room was near by. Their servants were lodged in two little rooms. Thus they lived for five days till they were packed off to the Madeira Islands where Charles IV died.

Near the abbey the Hungarians are building a Calvary in memory of that last king. Each station of the cross has been given by a town or county. It's so well placed, the part now finished is so attractive, it will surely be very lovely when it's completed and the trees have time to grow and make the background. Did Charles and Zita stroll over to this spot to watch the sunsets? What were their thoughts as they looked down on this beautiful Lake Balaton?

From the abbey we saw on every side conical hills which are extinct volcanoes. All the reddish soil roundabout is of volcanic origin, splendid for grapes. The vintage harvest here comes at the end of September. The grapes are carried across the lake to the press house.

"Is the juice pressed out by machinery?" I asked.

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"Yes," Luisa translated the reply, "but the machine is turned by hand. Tihany is famous for half a dozen kinds of wine, and each has the word 'abbey' as part of the name."

"Why is the lake called Balaton? Isn't there an old legend about it?"

"Yes, of course. The peasants say that long ago there was no lake here, but just a fertile valley. On this Tihany hill there lived an evil, old witch, disguised as a lovely queen. Princes sought her hand, but left in haste when they found out how wicked she was. Finally a young king came, she fell in love with him, and they lived together happily for some time.

"One day they were strolling through the valley and came upon a pretty girl watching her sheep. The king asked her name and where she came from. Balaton, she told him, and that her mother was a fairy who'd sent her to bring love and kindness and joy to men on the earth. The queen was instantly jealous and called her husband away; he had just a second to whisper to the girl that he would return at twilight.

"As he went down into the valley that evening, the king looked back and saw a scarlet figure leave the window of the queen's room and fly up to the highest peak of Tihany. He reached the pretty shepherdess just as a terrible storm broke and torrents of rain came down. Standing there together, they saw a red light on the bluff



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and the jealous queen, chanting one of her evil spells.

“‘Mother! Mother!’ the sheperdess called.

“At the sound of her voice the Tihany peak trembled, the castle crashed down, the old witch fell with it and was destroyed. The next morning king and sheperdess saw, in place of the fertile valley, a smiling lake. And to this day it’s called Balaton. The old fishermen say, when a sudden storm comes, that the witch is driving madly over the lake and changing its calm surface into angry waves.”

We strolled along the shore of the lake, hunting for arrow heads left here by prehistoric man; we found two, but they were broken. We searched for the peculiar Balaton stones called “goats’ nails,” but were unsuccessful. Luisa thought the weather was too fine, generally they’re found after a storm. We scrambled up a steep hill, wishing we were goats for an hour, and while we rested in the shade of a little Gothic chapel, I listened to the legend of the goats’ nails.

“There used to be many castles near the lake and in one of them lived a beautiful princess who herself watched the goats on the Tihany hill, for they had fleeces of gold. Very beautiful she was to look at, and that was well. But alas! she was proud, too proud of her voice. She was so stupid as to think it too lovely to be heard by mere mortals, and jealously she guarded it, lest a man hear her singing.

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"Now there came a day when she sat on this hillside, idly watching her goats, thinking that she was all alone. She was happy in the warm sunshine and the gentle lake breeze, and she began to sing. Prince Balaton heard—"

"Look here, Luisa, you can't mix people up like that. In the last legend Balaton was a girl!"

"Keep still. Don't be so exact with legends, you'll spoil the story."

And she went on:

"—heard this singing and immediately fell in love with her voice. He longed to hear it again and when this longing, unsatisfied, grew and grew, he became ill—so ill that the king, his father, was anxious. Many days and nights the prince waited near this hill, but the stubborn, proud princess would not sing. And Prince Balaton waited, sick at heart, waited just to catch a glimpse of her if he could not hear that voice once more, until at last he died of longing.

"Then the king was angry and stirred up a storm on the lake, and such a storm it was! All the goats with their golden fleeces were drowned in the great waves. To this day, says the old legend, when there's a summer storm at Balaton, the waves wash up some of the goats' hoofs and fling them up on the beach.

"Well, what is it?" Luisa interrupted her story as two little peasant girls stopped near us and shyly stood there, ready to speak when spoken to. "You have something to

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show us? Let me guess—goats' nails? I thought so. Show them to the American lady."

Shyly the older girl thrust her hand into her apron pocket, slowly drew it out, and opening it disclosed to view two goats' nails, the color of—how describe it? whitish-yellow, like old, unused piano keys. Far too large to be called pebbles, they seemed to me stones, nearly flat on one side, with a sharp ridge dividing the other into two equal parts. Well named, I thought.

"She says," Luisa explained what the girl was telling her, "she knows the best place to hear the echo. Let's go along with her and I'll tell you the rest of the tale.

"Grieving for his son's death, the king took the beautiful princess prisoner, for she was the one to blame, was she not? He shut her up in a cave here at Tihany, with a curse upon her; she must answer, answer with her beautiful voice, answer any one who called her."

Posted in just the right spot, we listened while the two peasant children shouted. We did hear the echo answering, but faintly.

"Is the princess asleep? Or does the curse no longer hold in modern days?"

"It used to work perfectly—the last time I was here the echo would repeat long phrases—oh, as many as fifteen syllables. But those new buildings, put up some years ago, have interfered somehow. Perhaps you're right, the proud princess has served out her sentence and the

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king's curse no longer has power over her."

We moved on down the lake to the very end, to a town called Keszthely. Again the day was very hot, but a refreshing swim and a stroll in the promenade made us forget the discomfort of the train ride.

At supper in the hotel garden we had *fogas*, the most famous of the Balaton fish. I thought it deserved its reputation. It was served whole, not with rich paprika sauce, but with melted butter and tiny new potatoes. The best fish I ever ate, bar none! Then came a cutlet, done just right. By that time we wanted no dessert.

But we sat on in the garden for a couple of hours, sipping wine and listening to the gipsy music. Here, in this little town at the tip end of Lake Balaton, I heard the best gipsy music I heard during a year and more in Hungary.

"They're playing very well," Luisa agreed, "as though they were playing for Queen Elizabeth. What more can I say?"

The Lord Mayor of Keszthely came to present his compliments and to make plans for the next day. Did I know that his town has a very old history? that the Romans had a camp near here, and long before the Romans prehistoric man lived here? They'd show me tomorrow. And I must see the church—1380—one of the few Gothic churches in Hungary not ruined by the Turks. Yes, the Turks were here and burned the whole

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of Keszthely, but the church wasn't so badly hurt but it could be restored. In the afternoon his wife would motor me out to Héviz, a watering place with hot springs guaranteed to cure rheumatism; so hot that I'd see red lotus flowers floating on the surface of the lake.

The next morning we went to the Keszthely museum which has a remarkably rich collection for a small town; a natural history section with the birds and animals and fish of this lake district; rooms with prehistoric treasures—arrow heads and hammer stones, tools and ornaments; and relics of the Romans—coins, earrings and bracelets, lamps, glass, copper urns.

"At first the Romans buried the bodies of their dead, each with a coin in the mouth—that was for the ferryman. Then in their last years here they began cremating the bodies and placed the ashes in urn cemeteries. Keszthely has both and that explains why there's such a large collection of coins and urns."

Luisa and the director of the museum were talking. At last she turned to me. Would I like him to take us out, not very far, to the site of a Roman cemetery? We hurried over the 1848 room and the carved objects made by shepherds, and the things sent back by Keszthely soldiers in the last war.

Off we drove to the Roman camp—an unusually large one, for some thousands of soldiers were stationed there, plus the civilian population that always sprang up

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around a camp. It had inner and outer walls; as late as a hundred years ago they were two meters high, but no one sensed how valuable they were and people took the stones for building. Thanks to this devastation and the normal wearing away due to the weather, there are only bits to be seen here and there. But with the director showing us just where to look, we saw a long stretch that turned and continued to the shore of the lake, broken at one place by a round tower.

The lake, he told us, used to be much wider than it is now and came up to the outer wall of the camp. One of the last Roman emperors undertook irrigation works here on a huge scale and as a result Balaton became much smaller at this end.

"Now we'll stroll along by the lake. This is the site of the Roman cemetery," Luisa translated. "Keep your eyes open. You're to go first, and stay just by the edge of the water where the sand's wet."

With my eyes on the irregular line marking dry sand from wet, I went slowly along, looking, looking. Suddenly I cried out in surprise and bent down. Yes, yes, it was true. I'd found a Roman coin, lying in a heap of little stones in the wet sand. Soon another and another. Luisa found one, and the director also.

Then, I declared to myself, there really were such people as the Romans, with a far-flung empire and camps all through Hungary as far as the Danube. It's not just

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something to be learned at school. Real, living persons, soldiers of the fifteenth legion, dying here and buried with money for the ferry.

How I wanted those ancient coins! I thought of different people to whom I'd give them, who would treasure them as they deserved. But I mustn't be selfish. With enormous effort I forced myself to hand them over to the director for his museum. He shook his head and laughed heartily.

"I was excited too when I found my first ones, but after I'd picked up ten thousand, I was finding only duplicates. Keep them if you like."

(Later I took my precious coins, soaked in vinegar and painstakingly scrubbed, to an expert in Budapest who reported that they were nothing remarkable—coins from the reign of Constantine II and Constantius Gallus, and the inscriptions said, *Felicitas temporum reparatio*.)

We strolled on to the end of the cemetery and stopped under the trees for a chat with a shepherd. He was an old man, dressed in a sleeveless coat of dark blue, full, white linen trousers, pleated, and high black boots.

"Finding old coins?" he asked. "Here are some."

He handed me five he'd picked up recently, but refused with a courtly bow the *pengo* I offered in exchange.

"Have you any carvings?"

"Not here. Plenty of them at home. That's all there is to do while I watch my cattle."

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“How many have you in your herd?” I asked the old man.

“Seven and eighty cows and one bull,” came his prompt answer.

He bowed and shook hands with us when we left—the beautiful manners of a Hungarian peasant.



## VIII.

## IF YOU KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN—

Hungary is full of quaint and unusual things, if you keep your eyes open; things that are interesting just because they're different from what we have in America or England. I suppose no two persons would note the same things. Here are some I noticed:

The policemen in Budapest carry swords and wear belts with their numbers in the buckles. When I went up to one to ask my way, he always saluted smartly.

How convenient I thought the glass telephone booths on the sidewalks. When I exclaimed over them, Annie said in surprise, "Don't you have them? Why, we got the idea from the U. S. A. You know, in motion pictures, when the girl goes into a chemist's and you watch her through the window, telephoning to her lover."

Is there anywhere a street like Andrassy ut in Budapest? It's very wide, perfectly straight, a mile and a half long, running from the business center to the park. It is so skillfully planned that there's no abrupt change from

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city to open green spaces, but a gradual transition. The beginning where there are shops and offices has two rows of trees. Then it divides into three sections, separated by wide footpaths lined with trees; facing this part are attractive villas and gardens. At the far end is the Millenium Monument with its colonnades and statues, and a museum on either side, so that the park doesn't begin too suddenly.

The specialty of the small shops is carried to the Nth degree. One sells only butter and milk. Another cheese—I didn't know there were so many kinds of cheese as it had in the window. The chemist who is a *gyogyszer-taros*, sells medicines and nothing more; if you want toilet articles, say soap and tooth paste, you must go to a *drogeria*; for a hot water bottle, to still another shop dealing in sickroom supplies.

In contrast to these special shops there are others with the most unusual combinations—furs and umbrellas; crucifixes and dominoes and chessmen (the latter with Hungarian designs—lovely!); tablecloths and napkins to match, sold at a corsetiere's; down comforts and rugs; walking sticks and dishes; stockings plus sweaters in winter and bathing suits with all the accessories in summer.

Many shops have pictures of their wares—paintings of furniture, of plumbing fixtures, of fur coats, of beautiful ladies who have patronized the hairdresser's. Some

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are naive and laughable. Some are so well done they make your mouth water—salami and fruit and cakes and beer.

Friday is beggar's day in Budapest. Shops put out at the end of the counter some small articles—to eat or to wear; a beggar comes in with his bag or basket, looks the lot over, takes one, says a hurried thanks, and goes on to the next shop. A very old custom.

Women—and not young women either—sell newspapers and magazines at sidewalk booths. Women selling tobacco in the tiny shops bearing the sign of the government monopoly. Women selling tickets at railroad stations. Women coming into your compartment on the train, to dust off the window sills; with brush and pan they make a pretense of sweeping up; sometimes they even empty the ash trays. Women carrying mortar up to the bricklayers in a new building; two together, barefooted, they carried it in a narrow, wooden box with long handles.

The places for advertising are amazing. Kiosks, as in many European cities, where space is rented out; on telephone booths; on tree guards; on street cars, inside and out, the latter sometimes in electric lights; on the backs of the benches which are very frequent on Budapest streets. What a clever idea it was to advertise white gloves on the straps you hold on to in the motor bus!

And what things are advertised thus! Special sales

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in the shops, a new course at the university, appeals for charity funds, a symphony concert program, the week's repertory in various theaters, with a change of cast blazoned in big red letters, a memorial art exhibition, Sunday afternoon races, the program for the fifteenth of March, a national holiday.

The Hungarians are fond of large-scale statues—much more than life-size—and of group monuments—six or ten or twenty persons around a central figure. With very few exceptions, their monuments have no names on them.

“Why should Count Széchenyi's statue have a name?” they asked in surprise when I commented on this. “We all know who it is, know his face by heart. Of what use is a name?”

I often saw on the streets chimney sweeps, dressed in black corduroy, with little, round black caps, and a shoulder burden of brushes and coils of wire. They're never out of work as the law requires every householder to have his chimneys cleaned so many times a year. Hungarians say it's good luck to meet a chimney sweep when you're starting on an excursion or beginning some new venture in your business.

From half-past eleven on, all over Budapest, I used to see boys on foot or on bicycles, with blue enameled racks having three or four compartments. Often a boy would carry as many as eight at a time. These were dinners

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being sent out from restaurants; some actually send out more meals than they serve at table. This is a recent development, now that many families are servantless; they can manage with dinners sent in, for breakfast and supper are rather sketchy meals with Hungarians.

On the street corners women pop corn and roast chestnuts. In summer they boil and serve corn on the cob. In winter squares of hot squash and baked potatoes.

In a restaurant you tip the gipsy orchestra, the headwaiter, the man who brings your wine or mineral water, and your own waiter. The head waiter wears, under his loose coat, a wide belt with four or five leather pockets; he must have a large amount of small change. Bread and rolls you pay for separately when you take them from the tray a girl brings round. Very seldom is bread left on the table.

"That's for sanitary reasons," some one explained, "people would finger all the rolls to get the softest one. Besides Hungarians eat an enormous quantity of bread, and this way there's no debating how many pieces you've had."

Speaking of bread reminds me how delicious the unsalted butter is in Hungary, but how expensive—in comparison with other things. Butter is never served at dinner or supper, often not at breakfast. Many times I paid for a very small portion five times the cost of a huge roll.

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There's one interesting figure in a restaurant whom I nicknamed "the snatcher." He's not a waiter, but a bus boy whose duty it is to snatch your plate away, the very second you've finished a course. Beware! if you stop for a moment to talk to your host, hold on to your plate. As far as Hungarians are concerned, this snatching is all right, for their rule is, when a course is brought, to stop all talk abruptly and eat steadily, as fast as ever they can, not drawing breath, till they've finished. Then the talk begins again till the next course is served.

Once where I was a guest we were twenty at table. I kept tab on the hostess. When the fourth guest had served himself, to whatever course it happened to be, she had finished eating hers.

How amused I was when someone told me later that this is the fashion in aristocratic houses, owing to the fact that Francis Joseph was a very quick eater. At court dinners he was always served first, and as soon as he finished, all the plates were immediately taken away. Guests who ate slowly went away hungry.

Once we were discussing the many differences between life in Hungary and life in America, and one of the young countesses asked me, "Please, why do you put your hands in your lap at dinner?"

"In America that's the proper thing to do."

"What?" she gasped. "Why, you could hardly be guilty of a worse breach of etiquette in Hungary than to take

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your hands off the table during a meal. When you were a little girl, didn't your governesses keep saying to you, over and over and over, 'Zita, put your hands on the table?'"

I used to wonder if Hungarians ever stopped eating. There were buffets everywhere, selling rolls, cold meat, soda water, iced cakes or plain ones, chocolate, and more things besides. At the opera, at theaters, at a fashionable skating club, at all the baths and swimming pools, at the Philharmonic concerts.

Perhaps this is due to the queer hours (queer to me) observed in Budapest. Concerts are at five, half-past seven or eight; your tea and supper you fit in as best you can, or patronize a buffet. Though eight is the customary hour for supper, the opera is always at seven-thirty, and it begins on the dot—one of the few things in Hungary that is punctual. One admirable thing about the opera—latecomers aren't admitted till an intermission. What a relief it was not to have people awkwardly climbing over me in the dark, just when János Vitéz was pouring out his love for the witch's adopted daughter, or Fanny Elsler was seen by L'Aiglon.

City ownership is astonishing in Hungary—and this doesn't count the national monopolies which are numerous. One city owns vineyards in the famous Tokaj district. Three towns (or more) own baths and swimming pools; they don't always mean an income for the town,

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sometimes there's a deficit. One city owns and manages a motion picture theater. A village owns an ice cave.

Just as Debrecen owns the Hortobágy and great flocks and herds and studs, Szeged owns no less than ninety thousand acres, rented out in little farms—forty-six thousand people are living on them; some of this land the city manages, to serve as a model farm. Budapest runs a travel agency and sight-seeing buses, a hotel and a sanatorium and the baths in connection with them.

And, this to me was the strangest of all, Budapest carries on all the business of funerals. Formerly the city did this in competition with three or four private firms, but as their privileges expired they were not renewed and now for some years Budapest has had a monopoly and makes a tidy sum each year. It is correct to say "the business of funerals"; there are different classes, each with a set price. You get just as many attendants, as much service, as many wagons for wreaths, as much black velvet with silver trimmings as you wish to pay for.

Hungarians pay much more attention to death than we do. One man told me that his funeral was all arranged and, what was more, paid for; he may live for years, for he was about sixty. When the husband of one of my friends died, she found on his desk a letter addressed to herself, telling in detail exactly what he wished done at his funeral and that she'd find the money in a



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sealed packet at the bank. It was nearly a thousand dollars, and they were not specially rich people either.

In a Hungarian village Mária and I were invited into peasant houses to see old costumes and painted furniture and beautiful weaving. Every woman, without exception, brought out for our admiration a large piece of linen, always embroidered in black, and a pillow case to match. Sometimes there were two of them.

"That is placed inside her coffin," Mária explained when I wondered out loud in English, "and the pillow under her head. Every woman has hers ready. Those with two? One's for the husband."

In another village, when we'd traveled six hours to see peasant costumes, we found to our dismay that this particular Sunday was the yearly service in memory of the soldiers of the last war. Every woman, young, middle-aged, old, was all in black; even girls of twelve and fourteen. In a small town in America women wouldn't all have possessed black skirts, black silk or satin blouses, black headkerchiefs and black shawls. In Hungary it was taken as a matter of course.

The same thing was true in public mourning when an important official died. Clubs and shops and an enormous number of private houses displayed large black flags—not new flags, bought hurriedly for this occasion, but old ones that had been hung out many times. Yes, Hungary pays more attention to death than America does.

## IF YOU KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN—

It's the custom in Hungary to send a wreath for a funeral, never a flat piece as we sometimes do. Part of the equipment of the Budapest funeral department is "wreath wagons," black wagons trimmed with silver, with special places on which the wreaths are hung. There may be one, two, or as many as ten, and each wagon takes a dozen or fifteen wreaths. Each wreath has a very wide, stiff ribbon with the sender's name in gilt letters, and a phrase of sympathy. Generally it is black, but sometimes this ribbon is white, gray, purple or red.

Large wreaths are used too on the anniversary of some historic event noted on a tablet. Sometimes a wall tablet has brackets built in, on which the wreaths are hung.

At a Hungarian ball—the chief social diversion during the winter—each mother chaperones her daughter. She buys their tickets, the young man buys his own; and to ensure a bountiful supply of young men, their tickets cost less. The mother pays for the taxi, for the leaving of wraps, for the supper—that's never included in the price of the ball. What's more, the mother stays through the whole evening, for balls may begin as early as ten, but they end at four or six. I've seen mothers tired at the beginning, frankly sleepy by midnight, yet they stuck to their posts. Often the father goes along also.

"Is it," I asked teasingly, "that Hungarian parents don't trust their daughters?"

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"Not at all," was the earnest reply, "but it's a tradition in Hungary, and as you've probably noticed in other things, we hold to our old traditions and never change them. Yes, it is hard on the mothers and means some sacrifice; but what mother wouldn't sacrifice herself for her daughter? It isn't for many winters—just as soon as your daughter's married, you can stay quietly at home."

Hungarians are great music lovers and know good execution from bad. They don't listen coldly and critically, but grow excited over what seen to an American good singing or playing, but nothing extraordinary, and recall the artist time after time. Applause is permitted during the opera. At a concert enthusiastic listeners stand up at their seats and clap their hands and call out, "Bravo! Encore! Encore!"

In the theaters there are seats at many prices, with three or four rows at each price. Once while I waited for a friend, I copied down the list for a matinee: six *pengös*, five, four-fifty, four, three-fifty, three-thirty, three, two-seventy, two-twenty, one-eighty, one-sixty and one. Imagine a New York theater with thirteen prices on the floor. Think of the bother of making change. But in these difficult times people count by *fillers*, not by *pengös*; why should we pay just the same as the Telekis who are sitting six rows nearer the stage?

Along many a country road I saw crucifixes. Many

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of these are flat figures, made of tin and painted, fastened to a wooden cross. A grateful peasant put up the cross, the tin figure he buys readymade.

At Easter every one—grownups as well as children—has colored eggs. It's a great compliment to have them given you. Some are dyed in plain colors, some have transfer pictures on them, some—the loveliest of all—are done in batik. Peasant women draw the designs on in wax before they dip the eggs into the dye. How proud I was when in one village I was presented with five eggs!

Hungarians put the surname first and the Christian name second. A married woman has both her surnames on her visiting cards. If she writes a book, the title page says "by Kovacs Mária—Andrássy Józsefné"; that is, by Mary Smith who is now Mrs. Joseph Andrassy. For there isn't in Hungarian any word for Mrs. or Madame. All that a wife gets is "né" tacked on to her husband's Christian name. Even the wife of the Regent, announced as patroness of a concert, is only Horthy Miklosné.

The waste space, as our architects would describe it, given over to stairs in public buildings, in apartment houses, in private houses. Often the beauty and grace of the stairs surprised me.

The amazing number of books in Hungarian households—far more than I've observed in other countries, for families of the same grade.

Roses thrive in Hungarian air and soil, but climbing

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roses and bushes are rare. Hungarian roses grow like little trees, with one thick stalk and a great head of leaves and blossoms.

When you send a wedding present in Hungary, it's engraved with your coat of arms, not the bride's.

In summer and autumn I noticed from train windows zigzag lines or interlocking circles, perhaps a foot wide, across many fields. The peasants plow these to prevent fire from spreading if it should start from engine sparks.

In various lands I've witnessed the tipping of various persons, for all kinds of services or supposed services; but the strangest of all I saw in a little town in Hungary where it's customary to tip the street car conductor. You give him back the *fillers* in your change—there's always change, as the fare is an odd sum for which there is no coin.

It's the proper thing for a guest, not the hostess, to suggest retiring. Nobody told me this till I'd been a good many months in Hungary. Sometimes it grew very late and I alas! sleepier and sleepier. I'd think, "If only the countess would suggest bed! Can't she see how tired I am? What shall I do?" And she was doubtless thinking, "Will this American woman never say good-night and leave us? Can't she see how utterly weary I am? What shall I do?"

Fortunately for me, and for her also, the conversation after dinner one day touched on differences in customs.

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“In America what does a guest do when he wishes to retire? Oh, it's the duty of the hostess to suggest it? Not that it matters here with us, but your next visit it might, so I must tell you that in Hungary you must suggest it.”

How relieved I was to learn the etiquette of being a house guest in Hungary!

## IX.

### REGENT AND ROYALTY

"Ah, Miss Grace!" exclaimed my landlady and made a deep bow. "Ah, Miss Grace," and another deeper bow. "It's too bad you didn't come in ten minutes earlier," and she bowed again.

"Why, what is it?"

"Very important," she declared and bowed once more. "They have telephoned—you're to go to the royal palace on Saturday at half of twelve, for an audience with the Regent."

A last time she bowed, putting both hands out with a sweeping gesture.

"You must be punctual," she went on.

"Yes, yes. Half-past eleven—Saturday."

Madame followed me into my room and began, as if this were the most important decision of my year in Hungary, "Today is—let me see, Wednesday. Now then, what will you wear?"

"Is it like going to see the Pope? Are there special

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regulations about this and that for American visitors?"

"Only that you must be very simply dressed."

"I'll wear the coat dress of black velvet."

She shook her head in disapproval of the scarlet facings and little rhinestone buttons. The green crepe, then. No., no. A cloth dress—dark red, very plain. No. I reached down a silk frock of black and white, with a shawl tie of white and green.

"That might do," she began doubtfully, "except for the long tie. That isn't dark and simple, is it now?"

"Oh, the tie unbuttons. I can take it off and have the plainest frock of black and white. Will that pass?"

"I think so. We must ask Marie to make sure."

Fortunately Marie approved our choice and immediately picked up the black and white, minus the tie, saying that she would press it.

"But I haven't worn it since you did it."

"That makes nothing," asserted Marie stoutly. "If the English lady is going to the royal palace, her dress must be freshly pressed."

On Thursday came another telephone message—not from the palace, but from the Hungarian who had arranged for my audience; does Miss Grace understand that she must be punctual? The same on Friday. The same early on Saturday morning. How I laughed, thinking of all the precious hours I'd wasted in Hungary, waiting and waiting and waiting for Hungarians who seemed



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to be always late. I thought of lectures and concerts starting a good half-hour after the scheduled time, of afternoon tea guests who arrived at seven, of long waits in reception rooms in this ministry and that. And now, I was told four times to be punctual.

Marie and Madame jointly inspected my appearance and started me off in ample time; in fact, so early that once more I had to wait. It was a splendid February day and the sunshine was brilliant on the Chain Bridge, on the ice floating in the Danube, on the snow-powdered hills of Buda. I crossed St. George's square, passed the Mátyás fountain, and went into the great inner courtyard of the palace. Not a soldier in sight.

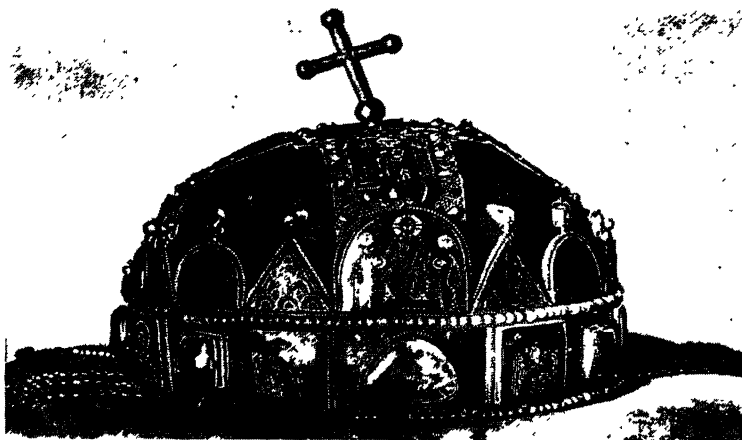
The doorman, in a long black coat nearly covered with gold braiding, said not a word, but motioned me up the stairs. A royal staircase that surely was—enormously wide, with a rose carpet a shade darker than the rose marble dado—a happy change from the vivid red carpets of most palaces.

At the head of the stairs stood one of the guards. How I longed to stop and get a really good look at his scarlet uniform and white surcoat, at his shining halberd and boots with turned up toes. But he was motioning me along to the reception room. A large and very formal room it seemed; green hangings at the windows, chairs and sofas done in needlepoint ranged stiffly around the walls; a few paintings; two huge vases.



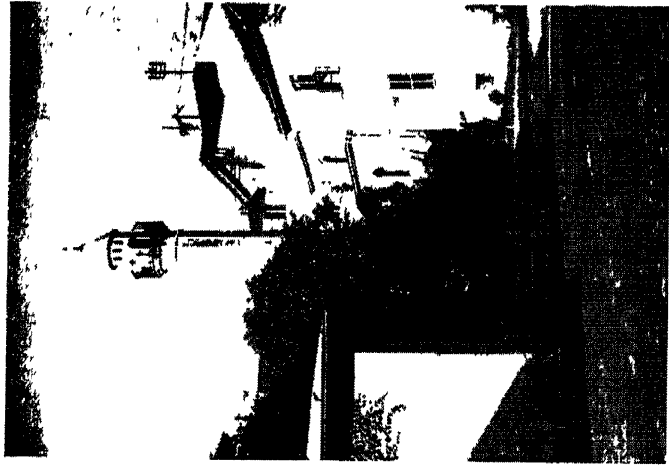
*Magyar Film Iroda*

THE FISHERMEN'S BASTION, THAT PART OF  
THE OLD WALLS OF BUDA, DEFENDED BY THE GUILD  
OF FISHERMEN, WAS RESTORED FOR THE CELEBRATIONS OF 1896



*Magyar Film Iroda*

THE HOLY CROWN, SENT BY THE POPE TO KING STEPHEN



*Magyar Film Iroda*  
THE TURKISH MINARET IN PECS  
—ONE OF THE TWO IN HUNGARY



*Magyar Film Iroda*  
THE CORONATION CHURCH TOWER WAS  
BUILT FOR THE WEDDING OF MATYAS

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The Regent has four aides—two always on duty, except when he leaves the palace; then only one accompanies him. They were in khaki, one with a sash of red, white and green, over one shoulder and under the other arm, with long tassels on which the Hungarian crown was embroidered. At a signal one of them hurried into the next room. In a few minutes he returned and motioned for me to enter.

As in many Hungarian offices, the double doors were heavily padded—sound proof. The aide opened both doors, but said not a word. The Regent was seated at his desk—a large table desk, with many objects on it, very tidily arranged. He rose, smiled, and came around the end of the desk with his hand out, saying most cordially, "Good morning, I am so glad to see you."

"*Jo reggelt*, Your Highness," I murmured.

"Sit here, please, where we can talk."

In half a minute he'd established an atmosphere of informality so that I felt as much at ease as if I were interviewing an American.

The light came directly in my face, his was in shadow. I had a vivid impression of a kindly, friendly man, sitting very straight—dressed in the blue uniform of a naval officer—buttons with anchors. Yes, I decided, the László portrait's an excellent likeness.

I had come at the wrong time of year, he was afraid, May was better and Budapest looked her best. But I

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was here for all of June, and the twentieth of August, and again in September—sandwiching Budapest in between Balaton and Transylvania and Mezöhegyes. That last word started him off enthusiastically and he talked about a favorite horse that came from the state stud-farm—the finest horse he ever had. Hunting was no fun if one had to think too much about his mount; that horse got him where he wanted to go, in plenty of time. Did I know that the only horse never beaten in a race came from Mezöhegyes?

Vitally interested in horses, I made a mental note.

A moment more and the talk was about an international music contest, and how many entrants there were from this country and that, how many prizes each had won—Hungary the most of all. He seemed just as interested in music and musical education.

Then the subject was agriculture and the economic crisis, and again history—of the Golden Bull, about the same period as Magna Charta, and Béla IV whose subjects outnumbered the English.

How long should I stay? Half an hour already. I'd asked about that, but Madame could only advise me, "You can't leave as long as he is talking to you. He'll probably make some little sign to show he's about done."

As he talked on and on, I listened, fascinated by what he said, trying to remember every word, though knowing I could never repeat it to any one, since this was not an

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interview—that I had been told with great emphasis.

He had finished speaking. I looked at my watch and edged over on my chair. He stood up suddenly. I told him why I had so much wanted to meet him and thanked him for the honor.

“Are you going to wear all your decorations to the Vitéz ball tonight?” I asked as we walked toward the door. (The Vitéz is an order established by the Regent, its members soldiers in the last war.) No, only the war decorations.

“You haven’t room for them all?”

He smiled. His face looks many years younger when he smiles.

“Why, how many have you?”

He thought about thirty-five. He was glad I was going to the Vitéz ball, it was worth seeing. He spoke very proudly, and suddenly put his shoulders back, still straighter, as if some one had shouted the order, “Ready, Vitéz, for Hungary!”

King or no king, I thought as the padded doors closed behind me, Hungary is safe with the Regent.

“Did I stay too long?” I inquired anxiously as I put on my coat.

“No, no,” the aide answered quickly, “you were scheduled for an hour.”

Why, oh, why, hadn’t he told me so?

I don’t know how word spread around that I’d had

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this audience with the Regent, but if I answered questions about it once, I must have done so fifty times. Always Hungarians asked the same two questions: "Does he speak English well?" and "What did he talk to you about?"

"Yes. I can't tell you, but it was most interesting."

"H—m, won't you tell anyone?"

"Never."

"Other plans? That doesn't matter. I've a guest card for you for the ball tonight. Half-past nine—can you be ready?"

"All right," I said meekly into the telephone and though my schedule was already full, with a tea, a call on an invalid, and a Society of Foreign Relations lecture at Parliament, I managed to be ready and taxied with Georgina to the Vigadó.

"What kind of ball is it?"

"University students. I'm one of the patronesses of this society and make it a point to come every year. It's not enough to send your money and stay at home; if every one did that, the ball would be a failure."

First came the students' ball committee—about twenty young men wearing their green-topped caps and carrying

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long sticks of white and green, with white roses at the top. Then the guest of honor, Archduke Joseph, in the uniform of some Hungarian regiment—light blue coat with much gold braiding, dark blue trousers. With him walked a priest in white with scarlet sash. Then a group of older men, in their undergraduate days members of this society; and the patronesses.

The center of the long side of the ballroom had a platform banked with palms. At the steps the students lined up in two rows and all the others went up onto the platform. The archduke with a wave of his white and gold scepter, and a sentence we couldn't hear, declared the ball open.

The two orchestras played the Hungarian national anthem. Then came a *csárdás*, danced by eight couples. The first measures of a waltz, and in a minute every one was dancing—every one except the long-suffering mothers and the extra young men. To be successful a ball in Hungary must have twice as many men as girls, for the girls dance constantly, the men now and then "cutting in." The extra men stand in the middle of the room, like an island, and the dancers circulate around them.

"Do tell me about this archduke, please. He's one of the Habsburgs? What relation to Francis Joseph?"

"First cousin. He belongs to a branch of the family that's always been more Hungarian than Austrian. He was born in Budapest and all his interests are here. Dur-



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ing the war he was a general in our army; he went into the most dangerous places; he was greatly loved by his soldiers, for he looked after them like a father. One of my friends told me he often came to her hospital at night to see some of his wounded men. And he was the only one of the Habsburgs whose property wasn't confiscated."

"Where does he live now?"

"In the same palace as before the war—the one you saw, with the high garden wall, near the royal palace."

"What does he do?"

"Writes books, oversees his estates, takes an active part in social work; and he's so popular every society wants him to unveil a monument or open a ball or be guest of honor at a dinner."

Various friends of Georgina's came up to be introduced to me and one of them said, "Please come this way." We squeezed past some palms, went up the steps at the end of the platform, and suddenly I found myself facing Archduke Joseph.

Georgina was far away across the ballroom. There was no one I could appeal to, to ask what in the world I was expected to do. Would it be like meeting the king of England? Not that I've ever been presented at the Court of St. James, but I've read about it and know you have to take lessons to be absolutely correct.

I presume my escort had asked permission and told who I was, for he didn't introduce me, merely bowed and

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gestured toward me. What should I do? What title to give to a cousin of Francis Joseph?

"Good day!" he said very loud and shook hands with me. To my surprise he motioned for me to sit down and we talked for some minutes. Where had I been in Hungary? He was astonished at my long list of places.

How long to stay? Not very long, I thought, and as he made no move to detain me when I rose, I slipped past the palms and went across the room to Georgina.

"What was he talking so long about?" she asked and then quickly, "Why didn't you make a curtsy?"

"Should I?" I said aghast.

I turned back to the platform and, sure enough, all the ladies being presented to the archduke curtsied at beginning and end. Why hadn't I been warned so that I could ask?

"I'll do better next time, but—I'm an American, you know, and—why didn't you tell me?" I defended myself lamely.

"Do you mean to say," asked Georgina, and in all my life I was never addressed in tones of such supreme scorn, "do you mean to say you've never been presented to royalty before?"

Democratic we may be in America, I vowed, but I trust we're not bred so dull but we can learn. I practised the curtsy till I could do it fairly well.

Later when I met two of the young archdukes and an

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archduchess I remembered to say "Your Royal Highness" and to curtsy. But alas! Georgina wasn't there to see me do it.

However, truth compels me to add that the younger Habsburgs are more democratic than their elders, and I really think they would not have minded greatly if I had failed to make my curtsy.

## X.

## A LIFE THAT IS PASSING

In many countries people feel nowadays that they are living in an era of transition, such sweeping changes have come since the World War, come too quickly to permit an easy adjustment. Never did I have this feeling so strongly as in Hungary which is the meeting place not only of east and west, but of past and future. Nowhere in all Europe have I so constantly felt the sharp contrasts. One hour I seemed to be living in medieval times, the next I was startled at something ultra modern.

Hungary's the only country left in western Europe where you see any reminders of feudal life. Of course there are no longer serfs—not since 1848—but many of the landowners feel as responsible for the welfare of the peasants living at the foot of the castle hill, or somewhere on their estate, as if they were still "our peasants."

A countess or baroness is nurse and doctor to all the neighborhood. One morning I was strolling through the garden with my hostess when a peasant woman hailed her,

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leaned over the gate, and talked a long time with her. Satisfied with the replies, she went away.

"What did she want?" I asked curiously.

"Oh, she came to tell me what a pain she has and ask what to do for it."

"And could you tell her—right off?"

"Well, I asked where the pain was and then told her to drink hot water and not eat anything for dinner. She'll be all right."

Another day while we were watching the harvesters a peasant approached our group and stood waiting. I motioned to the count who turned to the man and answered briefly when he asked something. He came back to me with a laugh.

"That man wanted to know what his wife should do for Tommy, their four-year-old; he's having a spasm. Oh, yes, one has to know a little of everything on an estate."

One hostess told me that until recently there was no doctor in the village near their country house. They could manage for the summer months, now that the children are no longer small, but the peasants lived there the whole year round and thought it a long and expensive journey to go to the town; the result was, they simply got along without a doctor.

"So my husband built an attractive brick house in the village—I'll show it to you the first time we walk that way—and offered it rent free, with firewood for the whole

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winter. With these inducements we were able to get a doctor here.

"But even so," she went on, "many of them come to me when they're ill. I worked in a hospital during the war and found I had quite a *flair* for nursing; perhaps I inherited it, as my grandmother was famous as a nurse. However, my daughters — or perhaps their daughters — will find things different. Every year a group of nurses trained in public health work is being graduated at the Institute of Hygiene. Two or three generations and the lady of the castle will find she's lost her job as village nurse."

More than once I saw a church, a convent or orphanage which had been built by some aristocrat for the peasants of the estate. In some cases, in the eastern part of the country, the owners were Roman Catholics and had built a Greek Catholic church on their land, so that their peasants would not have to go so many kilometers to church. One woman had opened an orphanage for boys and girls where they learned a trade and was herself managing a weaving school where girls whose fathers were out of work could earn enough to support the family.

How responsible people feel in this time of unemployment I noticed over and over. I was invited to spend a day at a large estate during the harvest season. With the son of the house I drove in a victoria out to one of the

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great fields of wheat—"the Hungarian sea" people call it in July, when as far as you can see there's only the golden grain.

"The best wheat in all Europe," Istvan said proudly, "and it makes the best flour in Europe too. Until recently we could say, the best in all the world, but a man named Pillsbury discovered an improvement in milling it and now Minneapolis ranks first for flour. But Hungarian flour is still the first in Europe."

We stopped to watch a row of peasants with scythes, swinging them in unison, the women binding the stalks of wheat into sheaves. I asked if they never stopped to rest.

"Only at noon, for an hour. They work slowly but unceasingly. Up at half-past two or three. Finish at sundown. Of course," he added quickly, lest I think the estate old-fashioned, "we have an American reaper, one with all the latest improvements; but this year we used it for only a third of our crops."

"Why?"

"Because the Ministry of Agriculture made a special request to all landowners to use machines for only a part of their grain, in order to give employment to more peasants. There are so many people out of work—far more than last year. The percentage to be cut by the reaper was left to us—to our consciences. Yes, it takes much longer to cut by hand. However if this fine

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weather holds, we shan't lose by the delay. And just think what it means to these poor people! Anyway, we're getting this year a very small price for our wheat—ten *pengös* for a hundred kilos, where three years ago we got thirty."

At another country house one of the daughters said to me at tea, "Did you have a little nap? I was so afraid the woodcutters would disturb you."

"Thank you, yes. I didn't hear any noise till I wakened and saw them from my window."

"It's a shame," she burst out, "to have our firewood cut like that. It makes my heart ache every time I see those two men at work or hear the buzz-buzz of their saw."

"The machine doesn't belong to you then?"

"No, I hired those two men in a town a few kilometers away. They brought their saw—it runs with petrol—and set it up here for two or three days, and during that time they'll cut all our wood for the house for a whole year. How is it done usually? The peasants saw it by hand. It takes two weeks, if several of them work steadily. But now," and her face clouded over, "the economic crisis has us in its grip and we can't afford to spend an extra *pengo*. It's really cheaper to have the machine for two days and a half than a group of peasants for a fortnight."

"Think how nice it is to get that task over so quickly."



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"Yes, but—you don't understand. I'm sad about it because I can't give the peasants the work to do. I'm afraid some families were counting on it."

In two country houses where I was a guest there was a resident priest. In one he had his meals in his room, in the other with the family. That seemed to me a survival of a real medieval custom and I ventured to ask if there was some special reason for it.

"Oh, no," one host replied, "no story about it. Our priest is now very old. He was a great friend of my father's. We have the little chapel at the end of the rose garden, there's plenty of room in this big house, and he stays with us like a pensioner."

But there was a story in the other case.

"My great-grandmother built the village school for girls and endowed it—with forty thousand gold crowns. The income was sufficient to pay all the expenses of the nuns who teach in the school and look after the girls of the whole village. Unfortunately the endowment was invested in Austrian bonds and today the income is—nil. If we allow the nuns to go away, the village must build a new school for the girls and my share of the tax is always sixty percent. It actually costs me less to give the nuns so much a year than to pay three-fifths of the cost of a new school. But in order to have the good sisters I must also have a priest. He lives in two rooms in a wing of the castle and we give him a small

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salary besides. He has time free for study and writing."

Estates are entailed in Hungary—not all of them, but many. In some instances this means a real tragedy. One family I knew has three daughters and the medieval will that entailed the property said that only male descendants could hold it. With the death of the father the girls will be homeless, while the castle and some thousands of acres pass to a very distant cousin. But there's been some discussion in Parliament about abolishing entail and allowing owners of estates to will them as they wish. That's a change that will come—in time.

Even the formal procession into the dining room, as I saw it in some country houses, has altered with the times.

"Did that seem so formal to you?" asked the countess when months later I was having tea with her in Budapest. "Well, I assure you, life at our estate is simple in comparison with my father-in-law's day. He used to come up to me in the drawing room, offer his arm, and in the most stately way in the world escort me in to the table. I'm sure it couldn't have been stiffer etiquette at court and that went on twice every day, even when we had no guests. This honor was paid to me because I was the wife of the eldest son. My husband escorted his mother in the same fashion.

"We talked it over and decided to change it when we came into possession. I thought we'd made things as

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informal as we could, with so big a family and always so many guests. And the children too— they did talk a little at table, did you notice? My husband and I were brought up with the maximum of strictness and never spoke at table, more than to murmur, 'Yes, sir,' and we kissed our parents' hands after meals, and so on. We determined to bring our children up with a little more freedom. I do hope," she added anxiously, "we haven't overdone it and let them go to the other extreme."

"No, you haven't," I hastened to reassure her, "but what would you think of American children and their utter freedom?"

"The life of titled people on great estates is rapidly changing. I can see that myself. Soon it will be gone entirely. I do so hope you'll see more than that one group in our country and not get the impression that Hungary is all life in a country house. One thing that keeps it going is the attitude of the peasants who refuse to accept any change and make it hard, if not impossible, for aristocrats to be democratic. They insist on observing the old forms and ceremonies, they cling to them more than we ourselves do."

With all the changing that's constantly going on in this time of transition, a new type of aristocrat is evolving. I remember one instance that made a great impression on me. I went down to breakfast one morning about nine o'clock. Presently one of the young countesses, per-

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haps thirty years old, came in, her face glowing, her eyes bright.

"What have you been doing? You look as if you'd had a delightful cold plunge and a half-mile run. Oh," as she came around the table and I saw she was in riding clothes, "you don't mean to say you've been out for a ride, after we talked so late last night?"

"Not for pleasure. I got up at six and at half-past started off with the head forester. We've gone miles and miles, to look over the ground and plan out our work for the next two months. Isn't it queer for me to be doing this? What would my grandmother think?"

"You see, my sister and I were brought up with four governesses, and this is what we were taught—to speak French and German and Italian and English (we haven't forgotten all our English!), to play the piano, to sing—my sister, not I—to do a bit of embroidery and a bit of water-color painting; to skate, to ride, to play tennis, and of course to dance beautifully—these things because you did them with young men and they provided a way of getting acquainted, and that was the method followed to ensure early marriage. Beyond that I was never taught anything.

"And now since my brother's death during the war most of the estate business has fallen into my poor untrained hands. I have to make the contracts with all our people. I have to decide about fertilizers and rotation

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of crops, and what trees to cut, and when to sell our wood, and where. I'm one—I wish I were a better example—of the new type of woman in Hungary. The next generation or two will see many of us, and they'll be better trained than I."

Greatly interested in what she'd said, I spoke of her to one of my hosts later on.

"She's right," he replied quickly, "and she's not the only one of our set. Just last week an aristocratic lady came to see a dam we're making; we walked back to the house and talked during second breakfast and I was amazed at her questions—about the dam, drainage, clover in her crop rotation, how much to pay for this and that; and she too was brought up to dance and ride and speak foreign languages and be pretty and useless. I take off my hat to the new type of woman coming among our oldest aristocratic families.

"But you mustn't think it's only among the women a marked change is showing. I never learned in my younger days to do anything useful—anything, that is, that would bring in an income. I could draw a little enough to illustrate two books I wrote; I could design sets for the theater; I could compose—a little; I wrote poetry; but it was only to amuse myself, as a dilettante, not a wage earner. And now I'm managing my estate myself, riding over the fields to inspect the new dam and to the stables to oversee the horses, and getting along

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without a superintendent, where we used to have three.

"I laugh sometimes when I think of one of my ancestors—we have the same name—who in the baroque period used to play chess with that set of chessmen you saw on the stairs."

"Oh, yes, I remember them—king and queen, castle and knight, over two feet high, in blue and gold."

"The chessboard was a carpet of green and black, with squares a meter each way—it took up the whole of the state dining room. The two players sat in their armchairs and called out to pages to move the chessmen for them. What a contrast with life today! All over Hungary, in town and country, the man of leisure is getting scarcer and scarcer. Princes and counts and barons are working and their children are growing up—some of them at least—with the thought of work ahead of them.

"Some of us, to be sure, are very 'choosy' as to what we'll do. Often I hear a young fellow say, 'I must work—but what can I do? I might go into a bank—that's not beneath me; but a bank's the only business I could go into.' Perhaps that's so; but I'll warrant, his sons will go in for other kinds of work. It's a transition age we're passing through. It's good that you've met some of the older men of our leisure class—a generation hence, you might not find any."

"H—m," was the terse comment of a Budapest man

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with whom I discussed this, "it's true that in this economic crisis it's difficult for aristocrats to find jobs. But—it's also true that it's difficult to find aristocrats to fill them."

How many times fathers and mothers talked with me about work for their daughters! Was it true that in America all kinds of jobs were open to women? What training must they have? Were there special schools where they studied first? Did I think such opportunities would ever come in Hungary?

A life that is passing. At one ball the chairman announced a quadrille, but it had to be given up because none of the young people knew how to dance anything but fox trots and one-steps (and of course the *csárdás*); the older women shook their heads sadly.

"I notice a great difference in the manners of the common people," one of my friends commented one afternoon as we left a shop in the Vaczi utca, "now that military service is no longer required from every young man. Clerks in shops, conductors on trams and trains, servants, yes, policemen too—they're not as courteous as in the old days.

"And I think life in the army," she went on, "must be as different today. Formerly every important family in society had one son in the Hussars. You've seen some of those costumes, with the elaborately braided coats. They had as important positions socially as the cavalry

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had in the army. Today there are so few of them, our army is so tiny, and airplanes have ousted cavalry from the place of honor.

"Did you know," she went on proudly, "that the Hussars are regiments of light cavalry that date back to the reign of Mátyás? and that countries in western Europe borrowed the name along with the uniform? Why were they called Hussars? It comes from a Hungarian word meaning twenty; some people say that every twentieth man served in these regiments, and others that one mounted man kept guard over twenty houses. But the Hussars themselves punned on the two words—*husz* (twenty) and *ar* (price)—and boasted, 'The price of one Hussar is twenty of the enemy!'"

One Sunday morning as we came out of church in a village in the north of Hungary, I saw a man beating a drum—evidently a signal to call all the people together. Only the men went, for though women vote, they aren't supposed to take much interest in public affairs, my host said with a laugh. I begged to loiter and hear what the announcement would be.

The notary read off a long typed sheet. The men listened attentively. There was no cheering, but from their faces I knew it was good news.

"People who haven't paid their taxes," my host translated for me, "may now pay in grain—rye or wheat. That's the gist of his announcements. Sometimes he reads



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out of a newspaper. A really medieval way of spreading the news, isn't it? But radio sets are getting to be so common, in a few years this picturesque public announcement will be only a legend in our village, I'm afraid."

"Just as oxen will disappear," his wife added, "when machinery gets to be more common on our farms. Just as sickles will disappear before the American reaper. But it won't come too quickly, with the economic crisis as acute as it is. They'll last out our time and perhaps our children's."

I've already spoken of the efforts my friends made to learn of a harvest festival that I could witness. These celebrations are becoming rare in Hungary, and every year more so. In the one I was fortunate enough to see, there was one tiny disappointment—the peasants were all in their Sunday best, but that wasn't especially Hungarian; and I'd hoped to see lovely peasant costumes.

"Very few of our people have costumes," Géza's mother said regretfully, "and each year the number grows less. There used to be a distinctive dress in this section of Hungary, with a pretty headdress. We'd like to do something to stimulate a pride in local costumes, but I don't know how to accomplish it."

"Why don't you offer prizes? Announce it in the late autumn so that they'll have all winter to do them. Prizes for the best weaving and the best embroidery. Wouldn't it be a good plan to put the peasants into groups—some-

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thing like this: girls and boys up to fourteen, fourteen to eighteen, eighteen to twenty-five?"

We talked over this scheme and I became so enthusiastic about it that I even offered a prize of a few dollars—it sounds so much more when you put it into *pengös*.

She was right when she said that peasant costumes are disappearing in Hungary. It's been true for more than fifty years in Szeged, in all the large cities. I walked for hours along Budapest streets and saw not one, unless by a great stretch of the imagination you call a costume the full, dark blue skirts of some market women, whose top-most petticoat sometimes has a band of red at the bottom.

Here and there some effort is being made to rescue the old designs and encourage today's young women to make their own clothes, and husband's or sweetheart's too. The best example that I saw was in the south of Hungary where the judge in the town has taken a great interest in reviving the ancient Sárköz dress. None too soon, for he found only one old woman who could draw off the patterns for their white-on-black embroidery. The school-teacher started a drawing class among the women. I looked at a dozen of their books and in every case the designing of the peasant women was better than that of the doctor's wife or the minister's wife.

As in many countries of Europe, the peasants wear their costumes only on Sundays. My trips in search of them weren't easy, for with the exception of Mezökövesd

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there aren't any near Budapest. It meant five or six hours on the Saturday train, sometimes with changes to little local trains, an early start on Sunday to get to a distant village by church time, and back to the city on Monday afternoon. The best part of three days to see one kind of costume! And the next weekend, do it over again.

But one fortunate time when Margit and I were spending a few days in the Bükk—mountains that are a part of the Matra range in northeast Hungary—there came a holiday during the week and some one suggested that we drive over to an afternoon dance in a nearby village. Some mistake about the time, we arrived a couple of hours too early. I think they were a little embarrassed and didn't know quite what to do with me all that time. Margit came to the rescue with a brilliant idea. Take me to a house and let me watch a girl putting on her costume for the dance!

Word was sent ahead. We waited anxiously for the answer.

Yes.

The judge in that village—he's always a very important person in Hungary—had one son who'd been married a fortnight before. He'd be glad to receive us. The bride was getting ready.

In five minutes we were seated in the best room, admiring the many pillows that reached nearly to the ceil-

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ing above the two beds, their ends gay with embroidery.

Presently the bride appeared—a rather pretty girl of seventeen, in a white blouse and three starched petticoats, extremely full and extremely stiff—but that was merely the foundation. She put on a skirt of flowered material. Then, one at a time, patting the pleats into place with infinite patience and infinite pains, adjusting the tapes to make the length just right, she put on eight more. One of them had horizontal stripes. Some were flowered patterns. All had a gay piping, about an inch wide, around the bottom—generally this was bright red, but once it was blue, again purple, once green.

“Please ask her, Margit, how many skirts she has.”

Not boastfully, but merely stating an every-day fact, she replied, “Thirty-two.”

Just once did I have an easy trip in this costume hunt. Grumbling a little at the discomfort I anticipated, I refused some invitation for Saturday evening in Kolozsvár, saying that I wanted to go out to the Kalotaszeg for church the next day.

“But not tomorrow,” argued Carola.

“What? I thought I must go on Sunday to see any costumes at all.”

“Better wait this time. On Monday the Protestant bishop is going to visit Nagykapus, and even the peasants who seldom go to church will all go for this occasion—it’s a great event when the bishop goes for a visit. I’ll

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telephone him and ask if you and I may join his group."

Not only did the bishop consent, but he sent word to the local minister to announce that he was bringing an American lady and he made a special request that every person should come in his very best costume.

When our two motors approached, the whole village and countryside were there to greet us. An arch of welcome covered with green branches—of course that was for the bishop. Two hundred and forty costumes for me—men and women, boys and girls. For brilliant colors, for the amazing amount of handwork I can compare them only with Mezökövesd. Aprons, of course. Skirts turned back and the inside embroidered solid, eight or ten inches deep. The top of the sleeves embroidered, and a wide band down the center. The girls had ribbons in their hair, with elaborate ornaments hanging from them. The materials alone for a costume in Nagykapus cost fifty dollars or more.

The most elaborate costume I saw in all Hungary, the richest and the handsomest, was at Torocko (in Transylvania). I was a guest in the minister's house and went for supper to the doctor's. He had been educated in Germany and asked me many questions about medical things in America. In my honor he had put on a tuxedo. The waitress wore her Hungarian costume, with her prettiest apron and headdress. I felt repaid for the journey.

Then after supper came the best of all. The doctor's

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wife showed me her costumes. Two chests and a large wardrobe were opened and one at a time the lovely garments were brought out and held up for inspection and my delighted oh's and ah's. She didn't know how many she had. Most of them had belonged to her mother and grandmother, who must have been wealthy peasants—perhaps typical of Torocko.

There were at least twenty aprons. Aprons of figured velvet, of satin, of plain or flowered silk. Every woman owns a black one, for mourning. Most of the skirts were plain color, blue or white.

The white blouse, with very full sleeves, had a sort of breastplate of embroidery, done with much gold; and an elaborate belt of red and gold, the buckle set with pearls and emeralds, and a big red stone in the center—it's fashionable to have the Hungarian colors in the belt. Most remarkable of all was the headdress, made of gold, laced across the back, with embroidered ribbons hanging below the shoulders. They were so many, no two alike. I asked how many.

She didn't know.

Painstakingly I counted them—fifty-six.

To complete the costumes were the jackets—one of blue wool, pleated, with green ribbons; another of white leather; one of red and black checked cloth. Such an outfit, with the red boots, tucked horizontally clear to the top, costs over two hundred dollars.

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"And very uncomfortable—yes," the doctor's wife agreed. "The headdress is heavy and in half an hour leaves a deep red mark on my forehead. And it's extremely hot for summer. There are fewer costumes than some years ago, even though Torocko was a very rich village."

Ask the reason for their disappearance and you get a variety of answers. It takes a great deal of time to weave and to embroider a costume. It takes a great deal of time to launder them. Think of the number of petticoats, seven or eight yards around. Think of all that elaborate pleating which must be done by hand—or rather, by hands; if you know just how and work very fast, you can get an apron done in an hour.

Train and motor-bus bring city fashions to the country and peasants are quick to take up the idea that they too must be in the fashion. Factory materials and readymade garments are becoming every-day things in little villages all over Hungary. Of course, they don't wear so well, they don't last so long, but they cost less money.

Strangest of all, to my ears, was a reason I heard given frequently. The disappearance of Hungarian peasant costumes is a direct result of the American motion pictures; and people would state this as reproachfully as though I individually were to blame. American films are very popular, even when they talk in English. Peasant girls see them, admire the star's lovely clothes, and want to imitate them as best they can. Immediately they begin



*Magyar Film Iroda*  
A BRIDE AND GROOM IN THE VILLAGE OF MEZŐKÖVESD



*Magyar Film Iroda*  
AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE WEDDING FESTIVITIES IS THE BRIDE'S JOURNEY TO HER NEW HOME, PERCHED ON TOP OF HER DOWRY OF HOUSEHOLD GOODS





*Magyar Film Iroda*

A TYPICAL COUNTRY HOUSE WITH FORMAL ENTRANCE,  
LONG, LOW WINGS, NARROW VERANDAS AND GARDEN



*Révész-Biro*

IN A HUNGARIAN VILLAGE THE HOUSES TURN THEIR  
GABLE ENDS TO THE STREET, TO GIVE MORE PRIVACY

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to feel scornful of their own costumes, made just like their grandmothers', and long for store clothes.

In a generation more, even arduous trips such as I made will not show visitors any peasant costumes. They'll have to haunt the museums. That will be the one place to find them. What a pity!

We stopped at the priest's house in a village in eastern Hungary. In his absence, his sister was good enough to show us some treasures in the old church, and painted furniture in a peasant's house.

"Is there a special costume here?" I asked.

"Yes, a few people have them. If you'll come with me, I'll show you some."

Alas! when we knocked, no answer. They must be all at work in the fields, but she knew where the key was and we'd just go in. In the best room she opened the wardrobe and took out three costumes—full, pleated skirts, bodices embroidered in gay colors, silk blouses.

"How wide is such a skirt?" I asked curiously.

"Eight meters—sometimes more."

"How many petticoats does a girl wear under it?"

She shook her head sadly and said, in tones full of scorn and disapproval, "Nowadays only one. One," she repeated, "one com-bi-nee, crepe de chine!"

## XI.

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"It's not enough for you to see present-day Hungary," urged at least twenty of my Hungarian friends. "You certainly ought to know something of the Lost Territories, for much of the most interesting, the most historical, the most beautiful parts of our country are there."

"Indeed, I sometimes think," added one woman, "that Transylvania and Upper Hungary are more truly Hungarian than—than Budapest, for it's become too cosmopolitan, than the central part of Hungary, for it's nearly all plains with no variety of scenery. As to history—well, go and see for yourself."

When I heard this advice for the twenty-first time I began to think of making these two excursions, and the more I thought of them the more I longed to go. Why not? I'd go and see for myself the beauty of the country and something of conditions in the Lost Territories today. Here and there and everywhere I asked for introductions, and fortified with a half dozen I set out for ten days or

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a fortnight in Upper Hungary; surely four days would be leeway enough? How astonished I was to find myself there, more than two months later!

I went first to Bratislava which the Hungarians call Pozsony and the Germans Pressburg. For centuries it's been a city with a population made up of three peoples. I noticed all the streets were marked with three names. (Shortly after my stay there the street signs were altered to bear only two names, for the Hungarians were declared, after the new census, to be no longer officially a minority in Pozsony.)

The city is splendidly situated on the Danube, but except for one little park it has made no such use of its river front as has Budapest; it's all given over to business. Since 1920 the shipping has grown by leaps and bounds, for the trade of all Czecho-Slovakia which used to go to Vienna and Budapest is now centered in this new port.

New—new—that seemed to be the one word to describe Bratislava, the first day of a visit there. The new state, Czecho-Slovakia, has done an enormous amount of building—many public buildings and great blocks of apartment houses, a museum, the beginning of a new plant for the university, office buildings, monuments, villas, hotels—for the population has doubled in the last few years. Naturally no emphasis is laid on the Hungarian character of Pozsony, but under the modern veneer I

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felt, after a few days, how rich the place was in history, how old and fine its culture. Bratislav, the Slav duke, seemed an outsider in this old capital and coronation city of western Hungary.

There was so much to see that was old and interesting—that I saw with some Hungarian friends. There was so much to see that was brand new and interesting—that I saw with some Slovak friends. Between the two I fancy I missed little. Was I not fortunate?

High on a hill, dominating the whole city from wherever you look, is a ruined castle which has so much history that it ought to have a great deal of atmosphere—but somehow hasn't. The Romans had a frontier fortress here, which they called Posonium. Old records mention a Hungarian castle on this site in the early years of the eleventh century. A hundred years later the daughter of Andreas II was born here; we know her as St. Elizabeth of Hungary, the child who was favored by God.

Mátyás fortified the place anew and embellished the castle. One of the gates is still named for him. One of the corner towers used to be called "the crown tower," because the coronation insignia—the holy crown, the mantle of Stephen, the sword and so on—were kept there. For this was where the Habsburgs came to be crowned as kings of Hungary for more than two hundred and fifty years; when the Turks occupied the country and the western part was all the Hungary that remained—and

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that only because of Habsburg protection! and after the Turks were gone the Habsburgs stayed on and on.

The castle was for some years the residence of one of Maria Theresa's married daughters. Then it was used as a Catholic seminary and finally for army barracks. Some Italian soldiers serving in an Austrian regiment caused the great fire that destroyed it. Since 1811 it's been a ruin—though some of it must be habitable as Czech troops are quartered there today.

At the foot of the castle hill the nobles built their palaces—mostly small ones, to be used only when the court was here; mostly early baroque in style, from the reign of Maria Theresa. It was in her time that the city walls and gates were taken down; only one gate stands now, St. Michael's, in a section of quaint, narrow, twisting medieval streets and little, old houses.

Some one took me to the Primate's palace which is now the town hall. Here, in the archbishop's audience chamber, called "the hall of mirrors" because the two long sides of the room are lined with small mirrors, the peace of Pressburg was signed after the battle of Austerlitz, Talleyrand signing for Napoleon.

"What was done by this peace?" I asked. "You must refresh my memory."

"You know about Austerlitz? The peace took from Austria Venice—and Istria—and Dalmatia—and the Tyrol. It raised Napoleon to the height of his power."

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Then my friendly guide laughed and confessed, "I'd forgotten too—but it's all written in the tablet here."

In the council room across from the "hall of mirrors" I saw six very beautiful Gobelin tapestries telling the old tale of Hero and Leander. They belonged to the Primate. When word came that Napoleon was near at hand, they were hastily taken down and hidden away in a wall of the palace; for the archbishop knew that if Napoleon once caught sight of them he'd carry them away for the Louvre. People forgot them entirely.

More than a hundred years later the city bought this palace. Some repairing was done and in one of the walls the tapestries were discovered. Of course the Primate brought suit to regain possession of them, but the court ruled they went with the house. So here they are in Pozsony instead of gracing the walls of the Louvre, as beautiful and fresh as before their hiding away.

But I thought the old town hall more interesting than the present one. Really old it is, built in the fourteenth century when Charles Robert was king of Hungary. In the vaulting of the entrance passage are bosses with sculptured heads—one is this king's wife, another is his mistress who lived in Pozsony; that was why he gave the town important privileges. The building now serves as a museum. The collections of armor, of historical documents, of glass and porcelain, of pictures, fine as they are, might be duplicated in other cities; two things it has that

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are unique, so that I shall always remember Pozsony.

From the top floor I climbed up to see the works of the great town clock. The guide liked to tell its story—and I enjoyed hearing it. Now this is the tale of the town clock of Pozsony:

In medieval days the burgomaster gave to a certain clockmaker the contract for this clock. During the months he was making it the man learned that the burgomaster was in love with his beautiful, young wife. Not a word did he say—to either of them. When the great clock, with all this intricate machinery, was finished he invited the burgomaster to come to see it. Unsuspecting the official came. They climbed up these stairs and stood where we are now.

The clockmaker explained this and that. The burgomaster nodded his head and smiled his approval. A fine piece of work for Pozsony! Then the machinery was started. The burgomaster leaned over to see the better. The clockmaker gave him a push and he fell into the machinery and was ground to bits. A private method of dealing out justice, perhaps no harsher than the regular judges followed?

Then we went into the room called "Camera Examinationis" where accused persons were questioned and tortured by the cruel methods of medieval Europe. The man took the greatest pride in this collection—the most complete I've ever seen. There were printed signs—Murderer,



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Thief, Child-murderer—which were put up above prisoners. Here were the stocks where they stood, near the town gates, exposed to public scorn and derision. Wide iron collars and bracelets they must wear, with a heavy stone ball fastened to the ankle.

I saw the famous “Pressburg maiden”—a form of wood, with hundreds of nails sticking up, on which a man was laid out for his beating. Here by it were the very whips they used. At the end of the room, in a deep bowl filled with charcoal, in which a red light burned and gave all the feeling of glowing coals, were the special iron instruments used in the torture—this pointed one for putting out eyes; that round, cuplike one for burning off a woman’s breasts; these with figures for branding on the chest, to show a first offense, a second, a third. I noticed they went up to seven, but I looked in vain for an A—Pressburg had no scarlet letter, evidently.

Would I like to see the finish of this gruesome chapter? There were catacombs in the basement where prisoners used to be confined. Of course I’d like to, though I wondered vaguely if I’d dream of it and wake up in a nightmare. Down, down, down we went into a medieval cellar and inspected three cells that have been preserved, with their original doors. Very thick stone walls. No light—absolutely none. A tiny opening over the door was the only ventilation. At the end of the room the chains.

Ah, how good it was to come out into the warm sun-

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shine and feel myself in the twentieth century again!

One evening I was invited to a *heuriger*—have you any idea what that is? The word means “this year’s wine.” Owners of vineyards in Pozsony have formed an association and each man is allowed to sell wine for two weeks, but only at his own house. He announces this to the general public by a wreath of flowers or green branches hung out in front. We went about nine o’clock and found the place crowded with guests.

My hostess had a number of little parcels. When finally we found a table looking out on the garden, she opened them. Rolls—cold sliced meat—salami, ham, tongue, veal. Men came around with trays and we bought radishes, green and yellow peppers, and later on little iced cakes. Mineral water and the special wine made by this *heuriger* owner—it was served in a large water bottle!

Formerly there was always good music at a *heuriger*. But owners of cafes and hotels complained to the authorities that they were losing all their customers to these temporary resorts. Music is now forbidden.

“Every class of society goes to these places,” said my hostess, “and of course people drink a great deal. But there’s never any disorder—we’ve often spoken of that. It’s like a cross-section of Pozsony.”

Would I like, asked a Slovak acquaintance, to motor out to Nyitra to see a religious festival in honor of the

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prince Pribyna who first brought Christianity into Slovakia? Next Sunday would be the eleven hundredth anniversary of the founding of a church there. People would come from all over the country—oh, thousands of them; forty thousand half-price railroad tickets had been given out and fully that many people would travel by bus or in private cars and carts or on foot. It would be a splendid opportunity for me to see the peasant costumes of all Slovakia.

So I went and had a marvelous experience, thanking my lucky stars that I was in the neighborhood for that particular Sunday. It's not often I have the opportunity to be present at an eleven hundredth anniversary. All the people were dressed in their very best and I saw more lovely costumes than I could have hunted out in weeks, with a different village every Sunday.

I think every organization in Slovakia must have sent a delegation. All the political groups were represented, some with very long processions. Schools and societies of many kinds, Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, soldiers and miners and farmers—group after group came marching across the bridge and onto the great field, crossing in front of the platform where we sat. One *gymnasium* for boys had a large Stars and Stripes, a present to them from some school in America. How fine the banners looked, all waving in the breeze!

A group of mountaineers carried their peculiar walk-

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ing sticks. The miners were all in black with white pompons on their caps. Another section had a harvest crown made of grains. A troop of dismounted cavalry were in dark blue coats with big silver buttons, red trousers and red caps with light brown fur—very picturesque.

There were girls in tight fitting caps, in caps reaching far out to the sides, in caps extending far back. There were girls with the tops of their sleeves covered solid with embroidery; others with elaborate bodices; yet others with wonderful embroidery on their aprons. Some had costumes using only cross-stitch, others had only cut-out eyelet work, some had various stitches. One group of perhaps thirty young women must have come from a rich village, for their embroidery was done in gold.

At the opposite end of Upper Hungary I spent some days in Kassa (Kosice it is on the map today—the name comes from the Roman *castra*) and there I felt still more strongly than in Pozsony what a high degree of culture there was, how far back and how far down its roots went. There's a very fine cathedral, the work of Villard de Honnecourt, the most famous of thirteenth century architects, whom the king of Hungary invited from France to rebuild this church, destroyed by the Tartars. Except for one baroque helmet it is straight French Gothic, inside and out; there is a large number of altars, fifteen or more, and every altarpiece is Gothic—how seldom a church has been able to avoid having some baroque altars forced

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upon it, spoiling permanently the original effect!

Near the cathedral is a little chapel, once part of a hospital built by the Teutonic Knights. Long ago the hospital disappeared, but the chapel still stands—much earlier architecture than the cathedral—with a quaint outside sculpture of St. Michael weighing good and bad deeds, and the devils waiting to carry off the souls of the wicked.

Kassa is not a big city—about sixty thousand, I think—but it has a museum started more than sixty years ago. There are prehistoric tools and pottery and Roman lamps, found in this vicinity. There are gilded wooden figures from old churches, and guild chests, inlaid or painted, and majolica from the Kassa factory. Hungarian costumes and portraits and armor and embroideries, and beautiful articles made by medieval goldsmiths. All these things bespeak an old and rich cultural life.

But most of all Kassa is famous as the center of Rákóczi's activities. This popular hero whom I knew from the *Rákóczi March* at symphony concerts, became a real personality for me in this town of Upper Hungary. I saw his house on the main street—in his day it was the largest and finest house in Kassa; and across the way is the church where he went every morning to early mass—the monks have marked his seat with a simple tablet; not far away the stables for his fifty horses; at the museum his coach and two baggage wagons.

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In a transept of the cathedral there's a large fresco telling the story of his life. Here his mother bends over his cradle. Born to be the richest man in Hungary, the heir to great estates and to the glorious traditions of the fight for independence, he was taken away from his family when he was only eight and given over to Austrian Jesuits to be made an obedient subject of the Habsburgs. Here is the schoolboy listening to the priest describing the fate of his relatives who revolted against the emperor—six tragic stories—to teach him that obedience and subjection mean safety, while revolt ends in suffering and death.

Young Rákóczi learned his lesson and returned home, planning to enjoy life with his beautiful young wife, the Princess of Hesse-Rheinfels. Back in the sharp mountain air of Upper Hungary friends told him of the terrible sufferings of people oppressed, of the constitution disregarded, of Protestants persecuted for their faith. He made his choice. Here in the center of the fresco he rides on horseback, proclaiming again the independence of Hungary. "For liberty" was his slogan, the words embroidered on his banner and stamped on his coins.

Louis XIV promised help, but kept only a small part of his promises. Seven years of heroic warfare. Then peace was made, against Rákóczi's wish, by one of his generals, bribed with a title and an estate. Rákóczi went into exile—here Louis XIV sends him to the Sultan. The

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last picture is his tomb in a lonely Turkish village by the sea of Marmora.

Nearly two centuries went by before the bodies of Rákóczi, his wife, his best friend, a general, and the master of ceremonies of his court were brought back to rest in Hungarian soil. They were placed in a small chapel in the crypt of the cathedral. Who would have thought, added my friend as we came up the steps from the crypt, that this purely Hungarian city of Kassa would in a few years cease to be Hungarian soil?

I went for afternoon tea in a castle which once belonged to Rákóczi. It used to have a square tower at each corner; three are still standing, connected by walls over thirty feet high. The entrance gate is the original one, with great heavy doors of wood, pierced with slits to shoot through.

As he frequently did, Rákóczi planted here an avenue of a hundred trees—two rows of fifty each; the first one he planted with his own hands. He often headed a letter “Under the hundred trees at—.” In more than two centuries only four or five trees have been replaced.

I was invited to a country house near Kassa to spend the day. We motored by zigzag roads over a mountain to a place called Krasna Horka, a castle of the Andrassy family. We had many glimpses of it, for it is high on a mountain—much too steep for carriage or motor; it was a stiff climb after we left the car.

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This is a house not all in ruins, as is so frequently the case in Hungary, but an actual castle with square towers and round towers and cannon on the walls. Not so practical for modern living, for it has no wells that are usable and water has to be carried up from the village—a long way.

The oldest records of the place—1247—speak of the castle as rebuilt after the Tartar invasion; since that date three families have owned it, the Andrássys since the early seventeenth century. As was often the custom, dining room and kitchens are in a separate building. This part is now a museum of medieval days. There's the chapel too, with knights in relief on their gravestones and tombs of several Andrássys. One of them has a story—

Count Andrassy went off to the wars with Rákóczi, during the struggle with Austria, leaving his wife, his two little sons and the castle in charge of his brother who was a monk. During the wars the count changed over to the emperor's side—it was a period of much changing of allegiance—and when he returned home, the monk denounced him as a traitor and refused to admit him. He went so far as to tell the two sons to fire a small cannon at their father. The very cannon is here.

As they stood at the opening, ready to fire, their mother put up her hand to stop them. Suddenly she had a heart attack and died so, with her hand up. In that position she was buried and thus we saw her, in a glass-



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fronted tomb in the chapel, dressed in a black silk frock and little cap, still with her hand up.

One of the nineteenth century Andrássys married a very beautiful young woman named Francesca. She belonged to a good, but not an aristocratic family. He was devoted to her and at her death was inconsolable. We saw the special hearse he had made for her funeral, with many black silk banners and black saddles for the outriders. Everything was marked A F. There were false tails for the horses that drew the hearse.

Later he made a suite of rooms in the castle into a Francesca museum. There all her personal belongings are displayed—frocks and trinkets, photographs of her and of her friends, her desk and books. At the foot of the castle hill he built a grand mausoleum—a sort of Taj Mahal—which cost more than a hundred thousand dollars. Alas, after the war the most valuable things, such as the mosaics set with jewels, were stolen. Think of being loved like that!

From Kassa I moved on to Eperjes (Presov today), a little town with one very long main street—proving that it has grown from a village. Strolling down this street was a delight, just looking at the facades of the medieval houses. Except those belonging to princes, the Rákóczi house, for example, they all had three windows. Space within the town walls was limited, and the land was accordingly divided into equal portions so that each

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family had the same frontage—a really medieval custom.

The Protestant College in Eperjes is over two hundred and fifty years old. I read its story in a pamphlet published in English in the 1860s, just before it celebrated its two hundredth anniversary. It seemed a resumé of history in central Europe.

From 1534 there was a Protestant school here, with three masters paid from the city treasury, besides the elementary teachers. When it became overcrowded, the good people of Eperjes determined to found a college for Upper Hungary. Subscriptions were asked for and a “general begging” was conducted in Hungary and Transylvania and in foreign states as well. A goodly sum came from Sweden. The total fund was almost a hundred thousand florins, plus two villages, a prairie, and a quantity of produce.

The formal opening of the college was in 1667. Four years later its troubles began. Austrian soldiers stormed the building in a night assault by torchlight, and gave it to the Jesuits. Three times a Protestant army took Eperjes and restored the college to the Protestants. Three times it was taken from them.

In 1711 it was for the last time given to the Jesuits and the Protestants were told they could build a church and school, provided they were put out in the suburbs and were made of wood; for they were on sufferance and their buildings must be inconspicuous. There they stayed in

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exile, modest, humble, yet persisting in their faith.

When Joseph II banished the Jesuits from Hungary, as part of his schemes of reform, the college building was sold at auction. The Protestants bought it back—for six thousand florins! Today it is used for library and grammar school, and the college has moved to a modern building.

“But you must, you simply must run up to Bártfa for a few hours,” urged a young man whom I met at tea. “You can go and come easily in one day. Don’t miss Bártfa!”

So from Eperjes I went, all alone, to Bártfa (Bardejov), a town of seventy-five hundred souls very near the present-day frontier. It used to be an important trade center, with wealthy merchants and craftsmen—riches in the Middle Ages meant culture. It has two treasures, both in the market place.

The first is the thirteenth century church, with no less than thirteen Gothic altars. Some of these altarpieces had sculpture in the center and paintings in the wings. Some were made by pupils of the Nuremberg craftsman, Wit Stwosz, the greatest master of that period when sculpture and carving, gilded and painted, were considered a higher form of art than painting.

The second is the old town hall, now a county museum. I don’t mean maintained by the county, but its collections are limited to this one county of Upper Hungary. Not

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peasant work and ethnographic exhibits. They are mostly from old churches and from the Bártfa guilds—rich vestments, embroideries and laces, old silver and glass, many documents with royal seals, privileges given to the town, and beheading swords, so huge it took two hands to wield them.

The center of a rich and ancient culture—that's this little town of Bártfa. Seeing it was well worth the journey and the time.

I traveled on to Lőcse (Levoca in the new naming of Hungarian towns by the Czechs). I suppose it must have been a village originally, with one main street, like Eperjes. When the Tartars under the dreaded Genghis Khan invaded the land, the inhabitants of Lőcse had warning of their approach and fled to a place in the mountains that was a natural fortress; once the danger was past they returned to find their homes totally destroyed. They set to work courageously to rebuild the village—but this time according to a plan—and this plan is still adhered to.

There's a great market place called the Ring, with streets running off from it at regular intervals, and parallel streets at the sides. To make sure of protection the good citizens of Lőcse fortified their town with high walls and gates and towers. It's rare in Europe today to find more than a fragment of city walls, but Lőcse has kept two gates and four towers and seven-eighths of her

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walls. On one side where a very steep hill provided a measure of defense, these walls are about ten feet high; in the most exposed part more than thirty.

In the Ring, without being in the least crowded together, are the town hall, two churches, a schoolhouse, a park and promenade, market space, and—one more reminder of medieval days—a “cage” made of iron bars. Here women adjudged guilty were placed for one or two or three days, to be hooted and derided by the passers-by and thrown at by small boys. Then their hair was cut short—a disgrace, not the fashion then—and they were escorted to the town gates and sternly forbidden ever to return to Lőcse.

“What was done to the men?” I mischievously asked the professor who was my Lőcse guide.

Very seriously he replied, “The men were already punished!”

Facing the Ring on all four sides are the fine old homes of the best people of Lőcse—not nobles, but wealthy merchants. They all had arcades in front and this roofed space was used to display their goods. Today there’s one stretch where these arcades stand unaltered.

Over and over I strolled through the vaulted passageways of these old houses, into arcaded or balconied courtyards. I loitered to look at their fine stone doorways—Gothic or Renaissance or early baroque. I gazed at stucco decorations and at elaborately carved consoles supporting

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the balconies. And I fully agreed with the professor when he said,

"In many towns the natives say proudly, 'See how old our culture is, look at this church,' when it was built by foreign workmen invited by some king or noble—that's especially the case when it's French Gothic; we know from the stonecutters' marks that many French workmen came to Hungary. Well, we have old churches too. But I say to you," he spoke even more proudly, "look at the homes of our Lőcse citizens—at the doorways and courtyards of their houses—and judge for yourself not how rich they were, but how much taste they had, how much sense of beauty."

The prevalence of the Renaissance style surprised me until he happened to explain, apropos of something else, "On the death of Pope Julius II the Renaissance epoch was practically over in Italy. Scores of trained workmen were out of employment and traveled northward. Renaissance architecture spread first to Hungary, then to Poland—some years before it reached the west of Europe. It did not last, however, for balconies and arcades don't suit our winter climate."

"But this was all a part of Hungary. How does it come that the Turks didn't carry out here their ruthless policy of destruction? 'Where Turkish horses have passed the grass will not grow'—that old saying doesn't hold good for this section of Upper Hungary."

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"Ah, for that there's a reason. In the fifteenth century one of the Hungarian kings, temporarily hard up, mortgaged this whole county to the king of Poland. A rich county it was, with no less than thirteen towns. I suppose he and his successors always meant to redeem it, but never did. It remained under Polish rule till the Partitions—nominally under Polish rule, that is; life went on as before for the Hungarians living here, but the tax money went to the king of Poland. That's how it was that the Turks never occupied this country when they conquered Hungary."

Every time I crossed the Ring I stopped and gazed at the town hall, partly Gothic and partly Renaissance, and at the Roman Catholic church which combined four styles of architecture. The interior took my breath away, for though there were a couple of baroque altars, there were fifteen Gothic ones. The main altarpiece was made by Master Paul of Lőcse, who was a pupil of Wit Stwosz.

"It's the highest Gothic altarpiece in the world," proclaimed the old verger proudly, "nineteen meters high it is, with a stone foundation of two meters. Yes, it's higher than the one Wit Stwosz made for the Church of Our Lady in Krakow, but not so wide. It's carved from linden wood, and the figures are painted and gilded. The British Museum wanted to buy it," he repeated three times over the sum offered for it, to make sure I understood its money value.

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"And the emperor, Francis Joseph, wanted to buy it and carry it off to the Votive Church in Vienna. The town of Lőcse, patron of this church, refused both offers," and he tossed his head to indicate his scorn for such would-be buyers of medieval beauty.

Another proof, said I to myself, of the good taste of Lőcse people.

Of course I made the acquaintance of the famous White Lady of Lőcse, who was really a historical person, but is become almost a legend since a famous Hungarian writer made her the central figure of a novel. She was the wife of a captain in the army and fell madly in love with an Austrian general who was besieging the town. She agreed to admit the enemy, opened the door of a passage that led under the city wall—there the Austrian was waiting, and so Lőcse was captured.

"Here is the doorway leading to that underground passage," said my guide, "and here you see the White Lady, in a badly done and badly weathered fresco, with one hand on the bar of the door and the other beckoning to her lover to follow her."

"What happened to her afterwards?" I demanded.

"Oh, she went to Vienna with him and the Austrians paid her one thousand gulden for her treachery. But when she asked for a title for her son, this was refused; they said she's been generously paid already. Later the Austrians doubted her loyalty, she was tortured and be-



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headed. Thus ends the tale of our famous White Lady."

I found Lőcse a charming town and a good starting point for excursions, so I stayed for ten days. One afternoon I went to Kapitula where there's a lovely old cathedral. Behind the church is a priests' seminary, the bishop's palace and garden, and one street of twelve houses where live the canons—"gentlemen of the cathedral" is the literal translation of the Hungarian word. And the whole—church and school and palace and dozen houses—is surrounded by a high stone wall and forms a township—the smallest one in Hungary!

We went on foot a kilometer farther and climbed a very, very steep hill to the Csaky castle. It's been a ruin for more than two hundred years, but a ruin that tells a fascinating story. Such an enormous castle I've never seen elsewhere. It had three courtyards: the first was large enough to give protection to all the villagers living at the foot of the hill. The second was smaller, with higher walls defending it. The third, much higher up, reached by a steep path, had still stronger defenses. I could well believe that only twice in its five centuries was it captured.

We could make out certain details—the lovely little chapel with tall Gothic windows; the great hall of the knights; many towers—some mere outlines now, some more than half intact. The castle rooms are half full of loose stones and earth, grass grows in the pathways, the

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walls show a jagged outline against the sky. But it is full of atmosphere.

Another day we motored to a monastery near Donnersmark. We entered the church through the old cloisters. Here in the 1470's a countess built a chapel, meaning it to be the burial place for her family, but it was never so used; it's really a double chapel, upstairs and down.

"Why, it reminds me of *la Sainte Chapelle*!" I cried. "Think of that in this faraway place!"

It was very high and very narrow, with much window space. Everywhere, in glass and walls, color, color, color. It was particularly lovely in the late afternoon light. What devotion those medieval families had, when one countess would defray the expense of such a little gem as this chapel!

Later, in a church many miles away, I saw another chapel she built which was really used for the family tombs; but it wasn't nearly so lovely as her first one.

Nor are churches and museums all Upper Hungary has to show a visitor. We went also to the famous ice cave at Dobsina. With a guide we walked along between high walls of solid ice. Here it was white, there gray-green, again bluish. At one place it's eighty-six meters thick, at another a hundred and thirty.

We could see how it had gradually been formed—here like rings in the trunk of a tree, there in layers like

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strata in geology. I suppose scientists can tell how long a time it took, but—it takes far more than one year to make one ring; stalagmites in this cave grow a millimeter in a whole year, or even less.

In some places the ice is perfectly plain—like artificial ice. In others it takes on strange forms. The guide has names for them all—the fountain, the pipe organ, a waterfall, Christmas tree, the stage of a theater (with curtains draped back to the sides).

“It’s the largest ice cave in Europe,” the man said boastfully. “It was discovered in 1870, explored gradually, steps and lights put in, and opened to visitors. It’s the property of the village which gets quite an income from it; thousands of people come every year.”

Upper Hungary is a mountainous land and a great place for hunting. In one castle where we stopped to make a call I saw more than sixteen hundred antlers.

“Is it,” I asked, “the collection of some generations of enthusiastic hunters?”

“No. They were all shot by my father,” answered the host.

“Did he hunt every day?”

“Oh, no,” he replied seriously, “only three times a week.”

The greatest treasure of Upper Hungary is the Tatra which it shares with Poland. This little mountain range is part of the Carpathians, but it’s an isolated stretch,

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made of granite where its nearest neighbors are of an entirely different geological formation. It must have been thrown up here in some convulsion of nature. It stands sharply outlined against the blue, blue sky—a majestic, jagged, rocky wall, all in a straight line. It's high enough to have snow all the year.

Unlike most mountains the Tatra has no foothills. There's no gradual approach. You motor along—excellent roads here—turn a corner and suddenly there it is! The very uneven skyline and the precipitous sides and snowy peaks have somewhat the effect of scenery on a stage. I wondered if it could be real.

As on the Polish side, this southern slope of the Tatra is full of resorts; all the year round resorts most of them are, popular for winter sports, popular for hot summer days, popular always for invalids and convalescents. There are special resorts for children.

The air is clear and very stimulating. I could tramp for hours and not feel overtired. And what alluring walks there were—along the highroad, through the forest, by a mountain brook, to this lake or to that one, down into a picturesque valley, to a waterfall in a fairy-story setting. Always lovely views of the mountains, constantly changing as clouds and sunshine alternated.

## XII.

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"Well, you mustn't think you've seen all of Hungary, just because you've traveled from Szeged to the Matra and from Sopron to Debrecen. Upper Hungary—good. But cross the frontier and explore Transylvania if you want to see the real Hungary. 'The land of the seven castles'—it's as romantic as its name, though very few foreigners know much about it, or even where it is."

"It was an Englishman," I replied, "who told me the story of Lloyd-George's appealing to a secretary, during the peace making at Paris, 'Show me on the map—where is this town called Transylvania?'"

Come what might, I determined to see Transylvania and set about getting some introductions. Not so easy a matter as I'd supposed. Some of my acquaintances were exiles from Transylvania and said frankly that letters from them wouldn't help me one bit. Others said they used to spend the summer there, but hadn't been back since the war; sorry, but they couldn't help me.

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More than ever before in all my travels, I felt as if I were leaving civilized life behind and going to the ends of the earth. With many misgivings I boarded the midnight train at Budapest, bearing four letters and repeating over and over the comforting words of a secretary at the American Legation, "Remember that you're an American citizen and if anything should happen to you, send us a wire and we'll come running to your rescue."

However one letter of the four was all I needed. To my amazement, some one came to meet me at the station in Kolozsvár—Kluj the Roumanians have christened it—and two people were at the hotel.

"Istvan asked us to look after you here in town and to help you with your itinerary. He's away for a week or two," they explained.

I had planned on ten days—and remained almost two months. That's the lure of Transylvania. Without a Bædeker, how could I guess how much there'd be to do and see? Until I met my hosts, how could I know how full my days would be? If I learned a great deal and came to know the country and the people—at least somewhat know them—the credit is mine for perhaps one percent, and the ninety-nine percent must go to my friends.

In all those weeks I lived four days in hotels and the rest of the time in Hungarian homes—sometimes a pay-

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ing guest. If I'd thought people hospitable in Hungary, they were doubly so in Transylvania.

Kolozsvár, a city of a hundred thousand, is a delightful place. It was for many centuries called "Kolozsvár, rich in treasures." When Transylvania was independent, it was the capital and today it's the largest city.

My windows looked out on the market place and a lovely thirteenth century Gothic church. Across the square was a large statue of King Mátyás the Just, who was born in this town. His birthplace is now a museum with relics of the War for Freedom of 1848-9, and a splendid ethnographic collection with lovely peasant things from every district of Transylvania.

However Kolozsvár had to wait till my return, for word from Maros Vécs said I must come immediately as my hosts were leaving shortly for a hunt. Off I went by train—a journey of nearly six hours.

In this country and in that I've stayed in all kinds of houses, old and new, commonplace and picturesque. Never before did I stay in a place so thrilling as Maros Vécs. It's high on a sheer hill above the Maros river which is here a narrow, very deep stream, whereas at Szeged I'd seen it wide and rather shallow. We motored over the bridge and up a zigzag road, making six hairpin turns that caused me to hold my breath with anxiety.

Half-way up the chauffeur stopped at the signal of a

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lady who was strolling slowly down, hatless, as if expecting to meet us. She got in, shook hands with me and said most cordially, "I'm so glad to welcome a fellow-countryman to Vécs." But she didn't tell me her name or who she was, and it was three days later when I learned by chance that she was my host's mother—from Washington and San Francisco.

The road had been built for footsoldiers and horsemen, not for automobiles. I breathed a sigh of relief when we stopped at the bridge leading to the one entrance of the castle. There's no drawbridge today—that was the one disappointment at Maros Vécs—but there used to be one, I could see where it rested when pulled up.

Servants came running out for the luggage. How amazed they were that a guest came with only one bag! Various people shook hands with me and I was introduced all round without knowing who was who. Into the courtyard and up a curving outside stairs to the first floor. Some one took me off to my room. They were waiting tea for me; would I come as soon as I'd freshened up?

But I could only stare and stare about me. Why bother about tea when I was in such a room? Vaulted stone ceiling—a deep casement window that looked down to what used to be the moat—walls nearly six feet thick. It seemed to be history incarnate.

The next day we were sitting on the terrace of the



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guesthouse and the baroness asked, "Did you know the Romans had a fort on this hill? Between the moat and the river there were sentry houses—this is one of them, with porch and terrace added. Gizella, take Miss Humphrey over and show her where the Roman walls ran."

Gizella pointed out irregular lines on the hillside, marking the two walls defending the camp.

"But long before the Romans," she added, "people lived on this hill—oh, in prehistoric times. We've found urns with ashes and primitive tools. The American tractor turns up hammer heads left lying about by men of the Stone Age. And last year when we were making a new road across the orchard, we found stones that paved an old Roman road."

I turned to look up at the castle—at the four corner towers, the stone lions by the entrance, holding coats of arms, the blind windows on the third floor, the wide moat—so wide the tennis court didn't use all the space. It deserved the name "castle"—it looked easy to defend.

"When the house was built," Gizella answered my question, "there weren't any windows on this side—only those facing the courtyard. The only openings here were small slits to fire through. Later windows were put in to make those rooms livable, but after 1848 they were filled in on the top floor—some with solid wooden shutters, some with bricks, plastered over."

"Why, was there fighting here in '48—so far east?"

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"Not actual warfare, but marauders took advantage of the unsettled state of affairs and looted the place, breaking all the windows. The ancestor who had Vécs then ordered the windows filled in, because the children worried her by climbing out on to the heavy beams that once supported the balconies. The same looting again in 1916."

"When was the house built?"

"We don't know. Written records go back more than seven hundred years. If you're interested especially, there's a pamphlet about Maros Véc, written by a Kolozsvár professor, that tells its whole history. I'll translate it to you if you like."

"In 1228," Gizella began, skipping occasionally where there was less of interest, "this castle was listed as one of the frontier fortresses belonging to the king. From then on there's a complete list of the owners."

When I learned how it came into their possession and why it changed hands so often, the castle appeared to my American eyes a page of central European history. Leaving out half a dozen less important people, this was its story:

"It wasn't built by a Hungarian king, but Andreas II (you know him as the father of St. Elizabeth) confiscated the estate of some noble, one of the conspirators in the death of his queen; he mentions it in a letter as one of his frontier fortresses—1228. After the Tartar

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invasion—that was 1241—people saw that the plan to defend the land by royal forts wasn't practical and they were given to influential nobles.

“From 1319 on Vécs belonged to the Bánffy family. But in 1467 they took part in a Transylvanian revolution against Mátyás who gave it to one of his relatives. Early in the sixteenth century the king presented it to Werbőczy—you saw his statute in Budapest—he lived here for some years and wrote his famous book of laws here at Vécs. To pay his debts Werbőczy gave it to Kendy, but he proved to be a revolutionary noble and the king took it away from him and gave it again to Werbőczy, then an old man of eighty. At his death Kendy had it once more and rebuilt it—there's an inscription about that; and when he died it came again to the crown.

“In 1588 Bocskay owned it. Then as the result of a battle it came into the hands of the Hungarian Transylvanian National Party. There were several claimants and for a few years the king gave it to no one. In 1612 Weselényi was the owner; then George Rákóczi, then Bethlen—Gabor and his brother Peter; George Rákóczi II who carried out his father's wish and presented it to the Keménys—that was 1648 and it's been in our family ever since—nine generations.”

Going over the castle took a whole morning. The top floor is unfinished—since '48—except for a row of servants' rooms. High up on the largest of the four towers

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is a balcony, a rich brown wood showing up against the gray stone. It was built in this way so the defenders could pour hot pitch down on the enemy. It offered a fine view of the river and the distant mountains.

Down on the ground floor again, we put on our warmest wraps and went into the cellar. It was like stepping into winter! There were special storerooms—for meat, for flour, for jams and preserves, for other food supplies, and for wine; they don't make their own wine, this country is too cold for vineyards. There were three kitchens—one they use every day, all tiled in white, with a chef in white coat and cap. The second's for preserving, the third for baking bread.

One windowless room with very fine vaulting was, they surmise, a Protestant chapel in the days when this sect had to worship in secret. One room was a prison—the walls here seven feet thick, with only the tiniest of windows. Various prisoners have left their record in sketches on the walls—stags and peasants which I thought very good drawing.

"But all prisoners weren't confined down here," related the baroness. "In that small tower there used to be a deep well, made with iron spikes sticking out from the sides. Undesirable prisoners were taken up to the top of the tower and quietly tossed in; if alive when they fell past all the spikes, they soon drowned or starved to death. But some years ago an old servant accidentally

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fell in and was drowned; then the well was filled. Such a pity!" she added, "we do so want another bathroom."

In the various living rooms, in the dining room and the glassed-in corridor facing the courtyard were many family portraits. This Kemény was chosen prince of Transylvania—that's the highest position in the land, the equivalent of king, but the office was elective. That one was for a long time a prisoner of the Turks and so was painted in a turban. The next went to Vienna and got himself made a count—"we don't think much of him," was their comment.

Three were painted in Hungarian gala costume—very rich and splendid, with so much gold. There was too a portrait of Rákóczi who gave the estate to the Keménys—as a little present. I liked very much a pastel portrait of Prince Rudolf, wearing the blue coat of some Hungarian regiment; he was the only son of Francis Joseph and Elizabeth.

"Here is Prince Rudolf again," said the baron, pointing out one figure in an enlarged photograph of a hunting party, "and my father, my uncle. And this man—do you recognize him?"

"It looks like—can it be, here in Transylvania? It looks like Edward VII."

"Right, but he was then Prince of Wales. No, he wasn't staying at Maros Vécs, but on an estate near by, and the party hunted over a wide territory. This is the

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best part of all Transylvania for hunting—and Transylvania offers the best hunting in Europe today. At the hunting exposition held at Leipzig a few years ago nearly all the prizes were awarded for animals shot here—the finest antlers, for example.”

“What do you shoot—not in medieval times, but nowadays?”

“Wild boars and bears, stags, lynx, and all kinds of small game. Here’s a kodak picture, enlarged, of the best day’s shooting we ever had at Vécs—fifteen bears; isn’t that something of a record?—to say nothing of the other animals.”

“Early luncheon today,” the baroness announced at breakfast one morning, “because we’re going off for a hunting trip. Please be ready, Miss Humphrey, with plenty of warm wraps, and hang around till we see if there’s room for you. I’d like you to go along part way and come back with the chauffeur.”

Two Keménys, one guest, the chauffeur, the chief forester, a keeper—all took their places in the motor. The guns, a big supply of food, cooking utensils were stowed away. My heart sank when I saw the blankets, the rolls of bedding, the extra wraps. Just as I was saying to myself that they couldn’t possibly get all their impedimenta in, to say nothing of me, some one called out, “Hop in, Miss Humphrey!” and I too was stowed away.

We drove for more than an hour, skirting the Maros

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river at first, then up and up and up. We left the motor and went on a flatcar of the little railroad that brings their timber down from the mountains. Always up and up, very steep. After half an hour the puffing, little engine stopped and we piled off, the train going on still higher.

Three keepers were waiting for us. With a skill that comes from long experience they arranged things for the tramp to the shack. Bundles and rolls were swung from poles, placed on the shoulders of two men. The baron and the two ladies carried their full share.

The chauffeur and I went along with them, up a mountain path bordering a brook, for ten minutes' walk, so that I could see how lovely it was. We were all silent, hushed by the beauty of the scene. Suddenly I felt myself in a fairy-story setting. Easy to understand here and to believe old tales of a woodcutter, of a peasant girl watching her geese and spinning, of some prince separated from his friends while hunting, lost in the mountains when night fell, and stopping for shelter at a shepherd's lonely hut.

I never appreciated before the fascination a stretch of isolated forest can have. The sheer beauty was overpowering. I could only look and look and look—and keep quite still. Who wouldn't give up every-day comforts and luxurious food to spend two days in such a beautiful spot?

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"The farther we go into the forest, the lovelier it is," said the baroness as she bade me goodbye. "Nobody minds that it's a two-hour tramp to the shack."

Two days later the children and I walked up the river road to meet the returning hunters. Perhaps they'd bring venison steaks. Maybe there'd be antlers on the running board, or fastened to the bonnet of the car. Far off we heard a honk-honk. I ran out into the thick dust of the roadway and wigwagged vigorously.

The kiddies were lifted in on top of all the impedimenta. I stood on the running board. Every one talked at once. No, they hadn't brought home any trophies. No, they hadn't killed a stag. But one of them saw a deer and the second morning the baroness fired at a bear—too far off and she missed. Nobody cared they were returning empty handed.

How happy they all were! They seemed perfectly satisfied with the results of their first hunt of the autumn. A glorious time, related the baroness enthusiastically, up at four o'clock, a hurried breakfast, then off to the various places chosen by the forester, and then a wait—and wait. Oh, it was so beautiful—and so exciting too when the next moment a fine stag might come along!

How sorry I was when I had to leave Maros Vécs; would I ever again live in so thrilling a house?

Even on Roumanian trains every journey was a de-



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light because of the constantly changing views. In the distance wooded hills or peaks of a higher range, in the foreground one smiling valley after another; a lake, a river, a mountain brook; a jutting promontory; peasants going to market; men plowing with buffaloes; a never-ending succession of surprises.

From Csikszereda I made three all-day excursions with the art teacher in a boys' school and his wife, stopping here and there to see an old church, a carved gateway, wooden crosses in a cemetery, an interesting house—the unique beauty of Transylvanian art. In such a forest country wood is of course the chief building material, and excellent carving is to be seen everywhere.

Along the roadside and near the churches are tall wooden crosses, often protected from rain and snow by a square shingled roof that comes down over the arms; or sometimes a round one that looks like an umbrella held over the cross. The tallest ones are five or six meters. The carving is often flowers—especially the tulip, the national flower of Hungary and the most Hungarian of all Hungarian designs. Sometimes the carving is painted—in red or in blue or yellow. For children who have died, little crosses are put up on the arms of the large cross of father or mother.

The gates of the peasant houses in this district are famous. They are huge affairs—a small gate at one side where people go in and out; and a very large gate, open-

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ing in the center, high enough for loaded hay wagons to pass. Running clear across the top is the dovecot, with a cross at each end. The upper spaces offer opportunity for lovely decoration. The peasants lavish their carving on their gates.

Often I saw the names of the owners and a welcoming sentence:

Peace to him who enters, a blessing to him who goes.

Stranger, this gate is not to bar your way;  
It shows you where to enter, night or day.

Peace to those who dwell here and health to the guests.

The country churches in Transylvania are old—old—old. Some were built by Stephen in the eleventh century. He gave orders that a church should be built every twelve kilometers, lest the pagan neighbors just over the frontier persuade his Christianized subjects to give up the new faith. All through the Csikszereda district many are still standing, with Romanesque doorways or windows and perhaps Gothic buttresses and some baroque addition. It's amazing that with all the destruction of warfare so many are left; but Transylvania, I learned, paid tribute to the Turks and so was able to preserve more of her ancient culture than was Hungary proper.

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Nearly all these churches are built on top of a hill—partly to give them a conspicuous place in the landscape, partly to make them less easily accessible. They're surrounded by walls, from three to twelve meters high, with strong gates and watch towers, with places to fire through—evidence of the constant danger in which men lived.

In most countries churches were erected in time of peace by kings or nobles or by a powerful priesthood. Transylvania is unique in this, that it had no powerful priesthood and the princes were kept busy defending the land. Here churches were built by the citizens and they served not only as churches but as forts. I appreciated as never before what Luther meant when he wrote,

A mighty fortress is our God,  
A bulwark never failing.

These hilltop churches furnished protection to the whole village—to the people themselves, for their stock and supplies of grain. In some the walls were so high there were two rows of openings and on the inner side a gallery along which the defenders could pass from one loophole to the next. When the Turks came huge lighted torches in the towers flashed to the next church a warning of their approach. As late as the end of the seventeenth century Transylvanian churches were used



THE TOROCKO COSTUME IS THE  
MOST ELABORATE OF ALL AND

*Erdélyi*



CHURCHES IN TRANSYLVANIA  
WERE FORTS ALSO AND GAVE

*Erdélyi*



*Erdelyi*  
TRANSYLVANIAN GATES HAVE ELABORATE CARVING WITH HUNGARIAN DESIGNS

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as places of refuge—so late the Turkish danger lasted.

I went into no fewer than eighteen of these country churches, here to see fine vaulting, there a lovely carved altarpiece and old vestments, again a Romanesque font or medieval fresco, or a wooden ceiling, divided into squares, each painted with an individual design—very Hungarian that.

I went too into peasant houses and looked at their painted furniture—chests, corner cupboards, spindles and oxyokes are all decorated—at weaving and embroidery, at their pottery. In every house, be the owner rich or poor, I saw a row of tall beer mugs. Sometimes a rich peasant has thirty, hung close together on pegs just below the ceiling of his main room.

“Why does one house have so many?” I asked.

“In the winter a group of peasants work together in the long evenings, night after night at one house till a certain task in hand is finished. Then they go to another house. The host provides the beer and must have a mug for each worker. Often a man knows his mug and when he enters the house, takes it down from the peg.”

The costume of the women here is a full, striped skirt, made with a yoke. There's a white blouse, worn with many strings of beads, and a sleeveless black jacket, embroidered with flowers. Unmarried women go bare-headed. The married ones have a wide headdress of black straw, made at home, trimmed with a stiff black

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lace. There may be one, two, three, even five rows of this lace, the number indicates how many yoke of oxen the husband has.

Csikszereda is the center of the Szekely country—a special group of Hungarians, as Bavarians or Prussians are groups of Germans. Some people say they're the descendants of Attila and his Huns who came into Transylvania in the fourth century; this group remained here in the mountains when the rest left. Others say the word Szekely means "defenders of the frontier"; certain it is that for more than a thousand years they have guarded this eastern frontier and have guarded it well. They had the reputation of being always good soldiers and for long they were exempt from any taxes in return for their services in war.

Once during our excursions we motored over a zig-zag road through a mountain pass, an important strategical point as invaders could fire from there down into the valley. Here in '49 the Szekely men held the pass against the combined Austrians and Russians. They had cannon made out of church bells, the work of Aaron Gabor. I saw one of these cannon in the Szekely museum.

For a whole week they held the pass, two thousand against twenty-eight thousand. Then a traitor, a Roumanian, showed the enemy a passage by which they could come out behind the troops in the pass. And thus they entered Transylvania. Gabor asking the churches for

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their bells and making the cannon appealed to others than myself as a dramatic figure, for Petöfi wrote a poem about him and the defense of this pass.

Here the Roumanian army entered in 1916.

We went to a place called "the pottery village." Excellent clay is found near the brook and nearly every man in the village is a potter, including the priest. The business and the skill are handed down from father to son and grandson.

We looked on while a girl pounded the great lumps of white clay, getting it ready to be moistened. We watched a young and very handsome potter who sat, barefoot, at a primitive potter's wheel, pushing it with his feet and moulding for us a beautifully shaped pitcher. He set out some of his finished work—bowls and crocks of all sizes, pitchers, beer mugs, large jugs. The piece I liked best was a pitcher of green and white; the price was less than ten cents. How I wished pottery was easy to pack!

"Another result of the economic crisis," translated the art teacher; "people can pay so little for a jug or pitcher that the potter can't spend much time on them, but must turn out more in a day to balance the lower price. So now he isn't making any copies of the lovely old designs, but puts on less decoration—just what can be done in a hurry.

"Another result," he said later when we stopped to



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watch a young woman weaving, "and this is the only good result I've yet heard of—the peasants have much less money nowadays and the women are beginning to weave and embroider their own clothes, instead of buying them readymade or making them out of store cloth. Perhaps it'll bring back into their lives some of the beauty in every-day things that was once common all over Transylvania."

In a village near Csikszereda I went to an old monastery, famous for a wooden statue of the Virgin. It's plainly Byzantine work, but nobody knows how old it is, nor who made it, nor how it came here. Legend says it was brought from Moldavia for safekeeping till a Tartar invasion should be over, and was never called for. The forehead and right cheek have deep cuts.

There are many stories about this statue. One is that when the Tartars came, all the people fled so that the invaders found a countryside entirely deserted. With great difficulty they loaded the heavy statue onto a wagon and started westward. The Madonna grew heavier and heavier till the oxen could pull no farther. Vexed and angry, the Tartars slashed the face of the statue with their sabers and threw it out of the wagon. Later the monks sent for experts from Belgium, from Italy, from France, to paint over the cuts, but constantly they broke open. No artist's skill could repair the damage and they show plainly today.

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Again, a group of Tartars wanted to take the statue away, but all of them together could not move it a foot, it suddenly grew so heavy. Once they took it away, using many yoke of oxen. Happening to look at it when they reached the mountains to the west, they saw it was weeping; the Madonna's eyes were full of tears which ran down over her cheeks. They were frightened and left it there. Using one yoke of oxen, the people brought it back to the monastery.

Once the monks themselves took it away, to avoid insults and profanation. The danger over, the figure walked back to its place above the high altar.

Many persons were healed after praying to this statue and brought it rich gifts. One present was a very valuable string of pearls which always hung around the Madonna's neck. An Austrian army was encamped near the monastery when one morning the pearls were missed. Diligent search was made. At last the necklace was found in a soldier's knapsack.

"No," he explained, "no, I did not steal them. My family are in great need. I prayed before the Madonna's statue and the Virgin leaned down and gave into my hand the string of pearls that was about her neck."

"It's very important," said the art teacher when our excursions were ended, "that you've seen so many old churches and so much peasant art. Now, tell me, what architecture has Transylvania?"

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"Romanesque and early Gothic, and some baroque."

"Nothing Byzantine, this close to the east?"

I thought a moment and shook my head.

"No, not one Byzantine thing have I seen, unless you count the Madonna at the Franciscan monastery. In architecture nothing—nothing at all."

"That's what I want you to remember. As to culture Transylvania belongs to the west of Europe, not to the east. Look at the carving on gates and crosses. Very seldom a geometrical figure. All the ornamentation is taken from the flower garden—roses and tulips, carnations, pomegranates, cornflowers—with some birds and stags. We may be the gate between east and west, but eastern we are not."

I moved on to Brasso (now called Brasow), a town with a strikingly picturesque site. It's in a deep valley, hills on one side and on the other a mountain rises precipitately right from the walls of the houses. A very interesting place, with stretches of the old walls, with bastions and towers; and a splendid town hall.

Its greatest treasure is the "black church," which gets its name from the fact that the Turks set it on fire and the walls left standing were blackened. Other churches have as interesting architectural details, about the same in frescoes and monuments. The "black church" has one unique thing—a collection of rugs.

They were made not in Brasso, not in Transylvania,

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but in Turkey. This was the first important market town on the way from Constantinople to the west of Europe. In all the world there are now in existence about three hundred of them—they're called by experts "Transylvanian rugs"—and of that number this church owns over a hundred. They're hung on the chancel walls, on the railings of the balcony, in front of the various guild benches. The windows are clear glass; the rugs are the only note of color in the church and how splendidly they warm the whole interior! The designs are very lovely, against backgrounds of red and brown, or brown and gold; one was a lovely indigo blue.

"How does a church come to have such a collection?" I asked.

"Some were given in fulfilment of a vow. Some marked the pews of important families. Some were gifts from rich merchants after an especially good stroke of business. Gradually the church got more and more. Today we know how valuable they are."

By train and carriage I went to Gelence to see the recently restored church. It was rebuilt, they told me, about 1350, on the foundations of a Romanesque church—perhaps one of Stephen's. The roof was done over in 1628, an inscription announced, its square compartments painted in lovely, soft, faded colors—flowers of many kinds, the Szekely coat of arms—sun and moon—unicorns and stags.

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The village had built a larger church, more in the center, and had left this one to go to rack and ruin, not appreciating that it was something unique and valuable and precious. It needed an entirely new roof; the side walls had to be pulled together. It would cost a good many thousand *lei*.

The restoration was the project of young Hungarians, some of them Protestants, some Catholics, but alike interested in saving this little church because it was worth saving. They began with no money, but with a plan and hopes. They took some photographs, made them into a booklet, and sent it around with a letter of explanation, each recipient sending it on to the next on the list. Friends in France and England gave some help. Little by little they got together a few hundred dollars and made a start.

Under many layers of whitewash they found old frescoes. One side wall must have had a series showing the Passion. We could make out the Last Supper, Pilate washing his hands, a fragment of the Crucifixion. On the opposite side the Resurrection and a row of Árpád kings, from Stephen and his son Imre to—was the last figure, on horseback, Louis the Great? and was he the last of the kings because the church was built during his reign?

We climbed up to the gallery to study another series, still more fascinating—the legend of St. László, fight-

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ing with a heathen tribe called Kun. Here he starts off to the wars. Next a battle scene. The chief has stolen a Christian princess, has lifted her onto his horse. She puts out her hand and pushes his bow to prevent his shooting straight. Their horses tied to the trees, the leaders fight on the ground while the girl, to assist her rescuer, hacks at the pagan's leg so that the blood flows down. In the last picture László holds his enemy and the rescued maiden stands by with a battleaxe to cut off his head.

I spent half a day in Segesvár, a little town that's absolutely medieval and unspoiled—as medieval as Nuremberg, and no tourists! More than two-thirds of the people are German, and this has been true since the twelfth century when the first German colonists settled here. I went all alone, without a card to any Segesvár person, trusting to luck to use my five hours to the best advantage. Which way to turn from the station? I saw a Gothic church tower and made for that.

At once I found myself at the center of interest. Here was the main gateway of the town, with a long and very steep approach, and stretches of the old walls, with passages from one tower to the next. Over the picturesque gate was a still more picturesque tower, with rooms above and a balcony all round. There was a great clock with figures of men that would, I surmised, strike the hours, or perform some interesting action.

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"What happens at the clock if I wait till twelve?" I asked a woman passing by.

"Oh, if you're a stranger, you must surely wait and see it. The figures strike the hours with hammers. The seven days of the week march around, bearing their symbols—sun, moon, Wodin and Thor and so on. The tower rooms are a museum—too bad it isn't open today. Wait, there's the sister of the director."

She ran across the street, hailed a lady there, and brought her over to be introduced to me. The director was in the museum now, she'd ask if he'd take me through. While we waited I consulted the first woman about a place for luncheon; must I go down and then climb that steep hill again? She looked me up and down anxiously and asked if I'd be willing to have my dinner in a private house. Next to the corner, her cousin's apartment on the first floor; they'd expect me in an hour.

The museum was a delight—an illustrated history of Segesvár from prehistoric times to 1918. There were whole rooms furnished in the style of various decades. There was a complete apothecary's shop. It's largely the work of one person—the director—and shows what one man with a hobby can accomplish, even with little money to start with.

I dined with the German family, in a house three hundred years old. But I learned little of Segesvár from them, they asked so many questions about America.

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Had I seen the Petöfi monument? He fell in battle near here. Search was made for his body among the slain, but it was never found. No tidings could be obtained from his fellow-soldiers. He disappeared totally—a mystery.

The inscription on the monument was two lines from one of his poems:

Freedom and love will ever be  
The highest bliss of life for me.

It was given in twelve languages, not translated for this purpose, but taken from published translations of his poems, and the names of the translators given. From that I could tell how great a lyric poet he was.

But museum and hero's monument and churches aside, the fascinating thing in Segesvár was the streets themselves. I spent more than two hours strolling up one and down another, and back again to the first. There were houses with buttresses, with walls slanting out at the bottom. There were houses plastered gray, lavender, yellow, green, brown, a pinkish red. Best of all, there were shops with hanging signs—the eagle, the crown, the lion.

A sleepy little town where, I imagine, nothing ever happens. Thoroughly and delightfully medieval, and absolutely nothing about it that suggested, "We keep it



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old like this to impress tourists!" No, I shouldn't want to live in Segesvár for always, but a few hours there were pure joy.

My last stop was at Torda. I wanted to see the church where the Diet of Transylvania was meeting when it issued a proclamation of religious freedom and toleration—the first in the whole world. The year was 1567.

As their part in the millenium celebrations of Hungary, the town of Torda ordered a large painting of this scene. At one side sits the emperor on his throne, two princes near him. Here are the members of the Diet, magnates of Transylvania in gorgeous clothes. Very skillfully the painter has made the light from the chancel windows fall on the face of the speaker, Francis David. "Faith comes from God!"

A fitting end for my weeks in Transylvania, the land of the seven castles.

## XIII.

## THE INS AND OUTS OF HUNGARIAN HISTORY

Until I went to Hungary, I was always rather hazy about its history. Perhaps not more so than a good many Americans. We know there is such a country. I remember learning in the geography class that its capital was Budapest on the Danube, two cities put together—Buda and Pest; and that Austro-Hungary, as we were taught the word, wasn't one country but really two, ruled by the same person who was emperor in Austria and king in Hungary.

I knew something of Kossuth because he was impressed on my mind when I was a little girl, by hearing an elderly gentleman tell how he'd traveled many miles to hear him speak, and remembered vividly his magnetism and the marvelous beauty of his voice. I recalled the story of Maria Theresa appearing before the Diet with her little son in her arms, and asking for help against her many enemies, and how the Hungarian nobles had as one man thrown up their hands and vowed to give

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their lives for their king, Maria Theresa. I'd learned about Stephen, the first king of Hungary, and a little of Rákóczi. That was the total of my knowledge of geography and history.

But I soon found that it didn't matter in the least that I didn't have time to "cram" just before I sailed. Everybody was glad to answer my questions, and without making me feel ashamed that I didn't know about this and that in all the details. I soaked up history a little at a time, learning a bit here, more there, still more at some unexpected place, till after some months I saw that what had seemed just odds and ends of information was gradually fitting itself into a mosaic and that there really was a pattern that would show in time.

"This," said Ida as we reached the far end of a cave near Budapest, "is perhaps the beginning of history in Hungary. When? About sixty thousand years ago the scientists say—maybe more. All this flat country that makes the great plains was covered with the sea. Look, here's the imprint of a seashell, and there's another."

Prehistoric man must have lived over nearly the whole of Hungary. In Szeged and Debrecen, at Eger and Miskolc, in Budapest and at Sopron in the west I saw his tools and weapons, his ornaments and pottery. Good designs he made in the Early Bronze Age, some of the work has great beauty.

The Romans left here almost as complete a record, for

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the Danube marked their frontier, shutting off the barbarians on north and east. All through Hungary they established their camps. Pécs has catacombs where the early Christians buried their dead during a religious persecution. At the baths on the Margaret Island I noticed some recent tablets witnessing to marvelous cures and the director said, "Yes, those are new ones. Long ago the Romans put up tablets here, thanking Apollo or the Muses for benefits received—you can see some of them now in the National Museum."

The largest excavation is Aquincum, "the place of five springs," half an hour from the center of Budapest—not so complete as Pompeii, showing not the highest Roman culture, for this was a military post and then a flourishing town with the culture of a far-distant province; but very interesting for all that.

The excavators found a theater that could seat several thousand spectators, with a special entrance into the arena for the wild beasts; dwellings and shops—the potter's is particularly complete—baths and aqueducts, church and cemetery, monuments and statues.

In the fifth century came Attila and his brother Buda with their savage followers, the Huns who made Rome tremble. The people liked Attila better, especially the soldiers, so that Buda and his wife became jealous. Their jealousy led to a quarrel which grew into a struggle for power; in the end they fought and Buda was killed—it's

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like Romulus and Remus in the ancient days of Rome.

Legend says Attila was buried in the Danube, in a triple coffin of gold, silver and lead. The hundreds of slaves who diverted the current, sunk the coffin deep in the bed of the river, and then led the water back over it were put to death, that no man should find the place and disturb the rest of the great ruler.

The next centuries witnessed "the wandering of the peoples" when tribe after tribe moved westward in Europe, leaving a record in their tombs—Goths and Longobards and Avars and Magyars. The National Museum is particularly rich in their relics, some of them surprisingly lovely—like the golden stags and golden plates found in Transylvania.

Real Hungarian history begins with the year 896 when the Magyars, as the Hungarians call themselves, came from the east into this great plain, searching for arable land. They had seven chiefs who chose one of their number, Prince Árpád, as the leader; chose him with the ancient eastern ceremony of the blood vow, where they cut their arms and mingled their blood in a bowl to show they were brothers, forming one nation.

These seven chiefs form the central group at the Millennium Monument in Budapest, put up one thousand years after their coming into Hungary. Near Szeged I motored to a second Árpád monument, on a hill raised by the Hungarians so that they could watch for the

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approach of their savage enemies across the great plain.

They came into Hungary through a valley northeast from Budapest. The scene was recreated for me in the Feszty Panorama, a canvas a hundred and twenty meters long, with tangible objects used here and there, so that it was hard to tell where reality ended and painting began. Here the Magyars are fighting with the natives who rush down the hill like a storm. There the pagan priest stands before the altar, calling on the spirit of fire, while a white horse is led up to be sacrificed and dancing girls scatter flowers. Árpád's wife is seated under a canopy, in a cart drawn by white oxen; there are long horse tails to keep off the demons. Again the invaders rescue some women from a burning house. There they pitch their tents for a first night in this new home.

A nomadic, heathen people they were, yet not without culture. They traded in furs, in iron and silver. They were clever animal breeders. They knew how to cultivate the ground. They had a highly inflected language which, like English, was very apt to borrow foreign words. Did they eat their meals haphazard? *Table, dining room and dinner* are foreign words. *Oak, beech, wood* they took from the Slavs. But *wheat* is a purely Hungarian word. And *writing, book, beauty, justice, art, happiness*—words of culture; their word for *woman* means "ruling lady."

Interesting that there isn't in Hungarian any word or suffix to indicate nobility—nothing like *von* or *de*. In 896

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they were all nobles. They had slaves, as was customary then, and were served also by prisoners of war. As time passed and life became organized, the Magyars, always great fighters, gave their serfs a choice—to stay at home or go off to the wars. If they fought well they were no longer serfs, but Magyars—nobles with all the rights and duties of the true members of the nation. Thus originated a lower class in Hungary—the peasants.

Duke Géza welded the various tribes into one government which became a kingdom under his son Stephen. He it was who made Christianity the religion of all the people and invited monks to settle in Hungary. They brought and fostered the arts of peace; they taught farming, drained swamps, planted fruit trees, built villages and towns, redeeming the land for civilization.

László, another king who was also a saint, I came to know from an old fresco in Transylvania and from a church in the Matra mountains where one of his miracles took place. His men had been marching for hours in the heat and were very thirsty. No water to be had. László prayed and lo! a spring welled up from the rock. It is today a favorite place of pilgrimage, but it's been so modernized that for me it had no atmosphere at all.

After László came his nephew, Kálmán the Learned. One of his proclamations was notable—that no more suits and complaints should be brought against witches, "because there are none!" This early in the twelfth century,

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when in central Europe women were tried for witchcraft as late as the reign of Maria Theresa.

Kálmán was a far-sighted politician. Taking advantage of the constant quarrels of the little seaside republics who asked his help, one against the other, he gradually conquered Dalmatia. This opened for Hungary her natural outlet to the sea.

At the end of that century lived Béla III who had two wives, each the sister of a French king. The first, Anne de Chatillon, is buried beside him in the Coronation Church. Their bodies were brought here from the Székesfehérvár cathedral, the only royal tombs not robbed and desecrated by the Turks. I remembered Béla III because his income was more than the English king's, for Hungary was a wealthy country—rich soil, forests filled with game, mines yielding salt and gold, with a flourishing commerce and all the medieval arts and crafts.

The next I learned was Andreas II who led a crusade to the Holy Land. That shows what an important place Hungary held among the nations of Europe, for the other candidates for this coveted position were English, French and German. Returning from the east, he found the nobles united against him and was forced to sign the Golden Bull, so called because the seal hung in a gold box—the document which is the foundation of the people's power in the state, like Magna Charta in England. Indeed the comparison is fitting, for King John's charter



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is a bare seven years older than this Hungarian one.

King Andreas was the father of St. Elizabeth of Hungary. In Pozsony I wanted to see her birthplace, but no one could tell me where it was—not even a legendary house. Perhaps I asked too much, for 1204 was a long time ago. But in Budapest I went to the church where she was betrothed, a child of four, young to leave her parents and go away to be educated in the family of her future husband. In many churches and art galleries I saw pictures of her, for her miracles offer good material for artists.

After Andreas Béla IV, in whose reign came the Tartar invasion, led by Genghis Khan. The king put into the field an army of fifty thousand which was overcome by sheer force of numbers. All of Hungary was devastated. The country lay utterly desolate. The invaders' departure was followed by famine and pestilence. Corn and colonists and credit were secured from other lands. Hungary set to work anew.

If the Tartars were driven out, vowed the king, he would give his daughter to the Church. In fulfilment of this vow he sent Margaret, then four years old, to the Dominican nuns who had a convent and school and hospital on the Island. For companions of her own age went two girls, daughters of magnates. She learned to read and write, to sing and embroider.

She took for herself the oldest and most ragged of the

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nuns' dresses. Visitors from the court were shocked at this and brought her frocks of silk and velvet, trimmed with jewels. She used them to make an altar cloth or vestments for the priest. From the palace gold plates and silver vessels were sent; these she used in the church.

When Margaret was seventeen Béla IV wanted to make an alliance with Bohemia and marry his daughter to a Czech prince, for she had not yet taken her final vows. But the modest, self-effacing princess cared nothing for the glamor of court life and worldly pleasures, and insisted on staying with the sisters.

At her death which occurred in the dead of winter when she was eighteen, every one smelt lilies and roses in the room where her body lay. Perhaps they were brought in and hidden there by the gardener's boy who was devoted to Margaret and had built a glass house to raise lilies for her to put on the altar—so Gardonyi suggests in a novel which is a lovely picture of medieval life in Hungary. She was buried on the Island and later was beatified.

Convent and hospital were destroyed by the Turks. Today the woodland paths near their ruins are the special walk of lovers who are under St. Margaret's protection. In statues and church windows I saw her often, dressed in the black and white of the Dominicans, carrying a stalk of white lilies.

Only three towns in Hungary were able to hold out

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against the Tartars, thanks to their walls. This fact led Béla IV to order walls built around Buda and to move the royal palace from a site farther north to the hill called the Vár. There are still extant some stretches of masonry, on the side facing the river, left from the palace built by this king. Part of the Coronation Church we owe to him too.

In 1301 the Árpád dynasty came to an end. A great family, ruling in Hungary for four centuries. Twenty-three kings and five saints. What other dynasty can equal that record?

Followed for more than two centuries kings of various families — from Bohemia and Bavaria, Anjou, Luxembourg and Poland; and two of the Habsburgs. The Anjous stand out markedly—Charles Robert and Louis the Great. The former helped a Habsburg win a battle and this success was the first step in that family's supremacy in central Europe. Strange, thought I, that never afterward did they repay Hungary in kind, though they had opportunity more than once.

Louis the Great reigned for more than forty years and under him Hungary reached the height of her power, for he was also king of Poland and of Naples and part of the Balkans, so that his dominions reached from the Black Sea to the Baltic and south to the Mediterranean. So many times I heard Hungarians speak of this period, quoting Petöfi's lines:

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O great were once the Hungarian people!  
Great were their strength and possessions.  
In the waters of Hungarian seas  
Sank the stars of north, east and south.

Threatening stormclouds appeared on the eastern horizon of Europe, the growing power of Mohammedanism, bidding its followers go forth and spread their faith with the sword. With enormous armies and all the resources of the east, the Sultans planned to wipe out Christianity—to change Buda's churches into mosques as they'd done at Constantinople, take over St. Stephen's at Vienna and Notre Dame at Paris. The whole continent would soon surrender to the power of the crescent. Few of us realize the terrible danger that menaced the culture and the peaceful development of Europe.

The first attack of the Moslem forces was pushed back by a brave soldier, not king but regent of Hungary. I heard his name so frequently that I found myself saying it in the Hungarian fashion—Hunyadi János. His statue stands at one of the hairpin turns of the motor road going up to the Vár. It's one of the figures in the Millennium Monument, dressed in armor and helmet, looking sternly out over the plains. Every day at noon I was reminded of him, for the ringing of the bells in Catholic churches all over the world was ordered by the Pope in memory of Hunyadi's great victory at Belgrade—Nán-

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dorfehérvár, the Hungarians call it—when he enrolled a fresh army at his own expense and temporarily stopped the Mohammedan advance into Europe.

A spirited fresco of this battle I saw in the Coronation Church. I could almost hear the battle cries, "Allah-il-Allah!" and "Jesus! Jesus!" as the Hungarians, outnumbered ten to one, charge the Sultan's lines till his troops flee in panic. Here too was a portrait of the Pope and a crowd of people listening to the public reading of the papal order.

If I'd missed the fresco, I'd have learned of that victory from the monument of John Kapisztrán, a monk who inspired his soldiers to fight against the Turks. It is fitly placed, near the War Museum and the Garrison Church, an impressive group of soldiers and the Franciscan. A friend translated the inscription:

"On the walls of Nándorfehérvár you broke  
their offensive.

O holy and brave knight, conquer our enemies!"

Hunyadi János died of the plague in camp. His lifelong enemy, the Sultan, sent a message expressing his sorrow that the ablest general in the world had died. However, when his career began he was wholly unknown. In a small battle in the south of Hungary he suddenly charged into the fight and led his men with a reckless

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bravery that surprised his countrymen no less than the Turks. No one knew this knight. No one recognized the arms on his shield—a black raven with a gold ring in its beak. About this raven I heard more than one legend when I found it in Kolozsvár and in a museum in the city park in Budapest and on two turrets of the Coronation Church.

One tells how King Sigismund was secretly engaged to a beautiful young girl and gave her a ring which she was to take to the king in Buda if ever she needed help. When her son was two years old she hung it on a cord round his neck and they set out on their long journey to the capital. Stopping to rest, the mother fell asleep and a raven flew down and snatched off the ring. The girl's brother quickly fitted an arrow to his bow and shot the mischievous thief.

Once at Buda, they told Sigismund the story and he gave the baby an estate in Transylvania called Hunyad and a coat of arms with a raven holding the ring. A duplicate of one wing of the palace at Vajdahunyad I saw in the park in Budapest, a lovely Gothic structure, reflected in the lake so that it's twice lovely.

Another legend runs something like this:

A son of Hunyadi János, the future king, Mátyás the Just, was a prisoner in Prague. His mother wanted to send him a message, with a ring. She summoned her couriers and asked how soon they could go to Prague and

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back. Three weeks—one week—four days, were the answers. Suddenly she heard a tap at the window. A raven, just like the one in the Hunyadi arms, snatched letter and ring, flew away, and was back in a few hours with the reply.

Hungarians are as proud of Mátyás as of his father. During his reign the country reached the zenith of her national life. He was a great king, a humanist, a good soldier, brave and cool-headed. He's the most popular figure in Hungarian history. Hundreds of stories are told about him.

One night he walked into a Turkish camp, disguised, and the next day wrote to the Sultan that he was carelessly guarded, proving this by telling what was served at supper in his tent the night before. The Sultan was so frightened that he retreated immediately. And once when Mátyás laid siege to a town, he entered it dressed as a peasant, and sold eggs while he spied out the fortifications so that later he led his soldiers through them without difficulty.

But Mátyás is still more famous as a patron of culture and the arts of peace. He was one of the most renowned Renaissance rulers in Europe. His court outshone all others in brilliance and splendor. At the Vár lived writers and scientists and artists, guests of the king; many of them received generous salaries, all were fed and clothed at his expense, for he loved the pageantry

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of life, though he himself was a man of the simplest habits.

He furnished the palace in Buda with costly works of art—a Madonna by Leonardo, Filippo Lippi paintings, gifts from Lorenzo de' Medici, to name only a few. Perhaps the most famous of his possessions was the library, called the Corvina. It occupied three rooms and had over three thousand books—a large number for those days—books in Hungarian and German and Latin and Greek. Most of them came from Italy, but Mátyás kept a staff of thirty busy copying manuscripts for him. To buy and copy and bind his books, he put into his budget the sum of thirty-three thousand gold pieces each year.

He did more than encourage the arts. He made a new code of laws which gave due consideration to the common people. It was they who named him Mátyás the Just, who grieved at his death and said, "Justice has died with him!"

I made a special trip to the royal palace to see the portrait of Mátyás, done by Boltraffio, who painted into the background the words, *Rex Hung.* The records tell that the king sat to the Italian for this canvas, which makes it specially interesting; and the fact that it was a recent present to Hungary from Lord Rothermere.

I felt closest to Mátyás the day I went to Visegrád, an excursion of four hours up the Danube. The river makes a double turn there. From the boat we had a



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splendid view of the castle and the great tower by the waterside, from the top of the steep hill a marvelous view of the river, up and down. Here the court lived during the reign of Louis the Great. It was often the meeting place for international conferences, for in that time Hungary was one of the Great Powers of Europe, her friendship and influence sought by many lands.

Mátyás embellished the palace and made it an earthly paradise, using it as a hunting lodge. Everything was on a splendid scale—three hundred and fifty rooms, stables faced with marble, fountains and statues, hanging gardens, frescoes supervised by Fra Lippo Lippi. Certain rooms are pointed out today where the king kept his dogs.

Now it's only a ruin, thanks to the Turks; and to prevent its being utilized as a stronghold by Rákóczi, the Austrians blew up what the Turks had left. There's still the great entrance gate, with place for a portcullis. There are walls, loosely joined, fragments of Gothic windows, a Romanesque doorway. Nothing more remains of the most brilliant court in Europe. Told me at Visegrád by just the right person, history seemed very real that summer day.

On the death of Mátyás Parliament declared that his library was national property and no books could be given away—an excellent law, had it been strictly enforced. Some were taken and used as presents by kings. Many were carried off to Constantinople by the Turks,

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others to Vienna by the Habsburgs. Today a Corvina codex is eagerly sought by collectors, for there are in the whole world only a hundred and sixteen authentic ones, widely scattered—Rome and Oxford, Paris, Vienna, Munich, Leningrad are the proud possessors, and there are two in the Morgan Library in New York. The text is beautifully illuminated, the bindings so splendid and artistic, with oriental motifs called the Corvina style.

Sixteen of these precious manuscripts were received in Budapest during my stay there, a belated carrying out of a clause in the peace treaty which stipulated that the national relics taken by the Habsburgs should be returned to Hungary. I was fortunate enough to be invited when they were placed on exhibition.

"If only the whole Corvina library were in Buda today," I sighed, "how librarians and writers and artists would come flocking, just as they did in the golden age of Mátyás himself!"

The thirty-two years of this reign came to an end. His successors lacked his statesmanship, his genius in diplomacy. The Turkish danger was again at hand—and no Hunyadi to withstand it. King Louis II was young and inexperienced. On the Buda side of the river, below the monument of St. Gellért, I found one day a tablet telling briefly that he set out from this place on July twentieth, 1526, for Mohács where he fell in battle on August twenty-ninth; the Turks entered Buda on Sep-

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tember eleventh—the beginning of a long enslavement.

Mohács—a turning point in the story of Hungary. Twenty thousand against three hundred thousand invaders; for there were dissensions in the Hungarian ranks and some nobles with their soldiers went home. Twenty thousand and almost all of them were slain that fine August afternoon—king, bishops, five hundred lords, nearly the whole nobility of the land, and common soldiers.

After 1526 the story is a sad one. Hungary's strength was broken. She definitely lost her position as one of the Great Powers of Europe. She was split into three parts: Transylvanis paid tribute to the Turks, but kept its independence (until 1711); the central part was occupied by the Turks for a hundred and fifty years; the western appealed to the Habsburgs for protection, accepted the Austrian emperor as king, and later, in a time of desperate need, agreed to the demand that the crown should be hereditary in the Habsburg family.

Tragic years. The Turkish conquest proceeded. Every city, every castle fought for its very life—a long, bitter struggle in which Hungary was slowly bleeding away; but at the same time the Sultan's strength lessened too.

In these gloomy pages of Hungary's story there's one bright spot that stands out like a beacon in the darkest night—the defense of Eger. It had been a worn-out medieval fortress—I heard the tale one August afternoon as

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we explored the ruined walls and underground passages that have been excavated recently—but by the most strenuous work the Hungarians made it over into a modern stronghold, with a counter-mine ridge deep down in the foundations. The bishop of Eger gave the money necessary—no small sum! and the plans were made by the best experts in Europe—Italians, Germans, Frenchmen, Spaniards.

Step by step the Hungarians had retired before the Turks. In 1552 the enemy reached Eger. The whole military force of the Sultan's empire, one hundred thousand men, laid siege to the fortress. The defense totaled less than two thousand and not all of them were trained soldiers; some were peasants; there were fourteen women, cooks and laundresses.

The Turks were at this time counted the best soldiers in the world. Their tactics were first-class; they had model equipment; they were particularly famous for their mines and their artillery. But at Eger not one mine-exploding experiment was successful; thanks to the underground passages the defenders were always ready, no matter where an attack came. Nor did all their cannon bring results; the damage done during the day by the Turkish guns was repaired at night.

Once at a critical moment when the foe were scaling the walls, the fourteen women fought too, seizing weapons that fell from the hands of the slain, beating back the

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Turks with stones and boiling water. Here's the record of one day: from dawn to sunset fourteen attacks, all at the same spot, where the Hungarians pushed back eighty thousand men by means of hand-grenades, a weapon new to the Turks.

After five weeks the enemy retreated, tired to death, and so ashamed of this failure that they spent forty-four years getting ready for a second attempt, to retrieve their honor. The Sultan came himself with two hundred thousand men, and the mercenaries in the Eger fortress surrendered.

Hungary was in the hands of the Turks for a century and a half, but all they did was to destroy—destroyed whole villages, destroyed all the churches in Buda and Pest, with two exceptions. They looted the royal palace, taking away boatloads of valuable works of art and furniture. The great candelabra of Mátyás are to be seen by tourists today, I'm told, in the mosque of St. Sofia.

It was, however, a weakened Turkish army that marched through Hungary in 1683 to besiege Vienna. The help they'd not felt it necessary to give to Louis II, Christian nations of Europe now gave to Austria and the siege was raised. This one victory led people to believe it possible to drive the invaders back to Asia. The Pope encouraged this idea. An allied army was assembled, made up of soldiers from every country in western Europe, led by Charles of Lorraine. They laid siege to

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Buda and captured it—this was 1686. But that didn't mean taking all of Hungary. The battle of Zenta some years later was a second great victory over the Turks, but not till 1718 did they give up their last foothold in the country.

In what a state they left the land! The Coronation Church which they'd used as a mosque had to be completely restored. The countryside lay desolate, for whole villages had been exterminated or carried off into slavery. It was necessary to begin at the very foundation, to invite colonists to settle here, to give them land and special privileges; everywhere to build and build and build.

One of the first steps was to tear down the mosques—Budapest had seventy—and the minarets which were, said the Hungarians, barbarian remains “unbecoming a Catholic town.” Too bad they couldn't look ahead and see that in a century or two they'd be interesting historical monuments. Today there are two minarets in Hungary—in Eger and Pécs. Budapest has two Turkish baths, still with star and crescent and tablets telling what pashas built them; and the tomb of Gül Baba who ranks fourth among Mohammedan saints. These are the only tangible evidences of a long occupation, for unlike the Moors in Spain the Turks did nothing constructive here.

At this period all power was in the hands of the Habsburgs. What interest had they in restoring the old, glorious kingdom of Hungary, rich and independent?

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They wanted to make it merely a tributary province of Austria.

With growing anxiety Hungarian patriots saw their country's independence threatened, her future happiness and development. They had always believed in parliamentary government and in religious liberty. So began a long and bitter struggle to resist Austria's increasing domination in their affairs, to withstand her absolutism and her centralizing schemes.

Both Catholics and Protestants led the frequent revolts—the Zrinyis, Bocskay, Bethlen, Thököly, Rákóczi. The last came so near succeeding that if France had kept her promises Hungary might have won out. To prevent another such revolution, the Austrians ordered all the Hungarian castles blown up—that was the story I heard at one ruined castle after another.

Of the sixteen Habsburg sovereigns only one seems to have cared much about the country; the rest treated her like a stepchild; but for this exception there was reason enough.

In the Parliamentary Museum I saw the original of the Pragmatic Sanction, a long document in Latin, which established Maria Theresa as her father's heir. Over and over I saw pictured the scene where the young empress—then twenty-three—appealed to the Diet of Hungary, standing before the nobles, beautiful, helpless, with her little son in her arms. She was at the height of her mis-

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fortunes, with Europe against her, the Viennese openly disloyal. It was an appeal to the chivalry of Hungarian nobles.

Did they stop to think of all the indignities they'd suffered at the hands of Austria? Did they argue as to the wisdom of fighting Russia plus Prussia? Not for a moment. As one man, they drew their swords and answered her with a shout, "Our blood and our lives we will give for our king, Maria Theresa!" More, they voted troops and funds so that she could prosecute the war vigorously. It took years, but she won out at last.

Secure on her throne, she showed her gratitude to Hungary. She brought colonists from western Europe—even from Ireland—and settled them in the devastated land. She restored the royal palace in Buda and built churches and castles and schools, in a great building campaign to replace a part of what the Turks had destroyed.

But she did one thing that may have been pleasant at the time, but in the end was bad for Hungary. She invited the nobles to her court at Vienna, flattered and made much of them, increased the number of the Hungarian Guards, and weaned the leaders away from their native land. Many of them had only small palaces in Buda and gorgeous ones in Vienna where they spent their time—a policy against which Széchenyi was to protest later on.

The baby that Maria Theresa held in her arms when



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she made her dramatic appeal to the Diet succeeded her as Joseph II. Hungarians called him "the hatted king," because he was never crowned king of Hungary—not that they refused to acknowledge him, but he himself wasn't willing to swear to abide by the constitution. He wanted to rule without any trammels and make many innovations—changes that he afterward saw the people weren't ready for.

The crown of St. Stephen he carried off to Vienna, saying it was valuable as a work of art. Just before his death, when he canceled many of his laws, he sent the crown back to Buda. It traveled in state, almost like a king, in a gilded coach with glass sides. All along the way the people assembled to see it pass and brought flowers to show their rejoicing, welcoming the crown of Stephen back to its home.

The Napoleonic period was for Hungary merely a matter of fighting with Austria. Probably they were no fonder of the Habsburgs then than before, but loyalty is one of their most striking characteristics and when Napoleon suggested that they throw off the Austrian yoke and elect a ruler of their own, the answer was that they had sworn to be loyal to Francis I and would not even consider this suggestion.

They poured out their soldiers without stint. They were defeated by the French on Hungarian soil. Pozsony was occupied and had to pay a large indemnity.

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In the end the Habsburg yoke was riveted more tightly on Hungary's neck.

In the second quarter of the nineteenth century kings are less important in the story of Hungary than Count Stephen Széchenyi, "the greatest Hungarian." He used to say, "Do not trouble about the glories of the past, but rather let your patriotism bring about the prosperity of the Fatherland. Many there are who think that Hungary has been; for my part, I like to think that Hungary shall be." That last clause has been set to music and is the call for the radio station of Budapest—"I like to think that Hungary shall be."

In the most practical ways in the world he set about making his country prosperous and great. He planned the Chain Bridge, the first to join Buda and Pest, connecting, he said, the past and the future. He started the first steamboats on the Danube and dynamited the Iron Gates at the southeastern frontier, so that these boats could go down to the Black Sea. He drained great tracts of land for farming and regulated rivers after the disastrous floods of 1838.

A many-sided man, he wrote plays and books on finance and horse breeding. He traveled widely and even worked in an English factory to learn something about machinery. He was the first member of the House of Magnates to make a speech in Hungarian instead of Latin. He took up the idea of an Academy of Sciences

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and gave a year's income to help start it—the institution that is today at the head of literary and scientific work in Hungary. He built the first flour mills in Budapest, long the foremost in the world. To persuade the nobles to spend their time and money at home and not always in Vienna, he started an association for breeding fine horses, and one to further agriculture, as well as a fashionable club. Every little town and every city in Hungary has a Széchenyi Street and a Széchenyi Place and a Széchenyi statue.

Living at the same time was Louis Kossuth who began his career as a journalist, making shorthand reports of debates in the Diet. Both were men of burning patriotism, their aims identical, their methods radically different. Széchenyi urged the people to think and then to act, Kossuth wanted them to feel and then to do. He was a great orator, a fiery speaker who played on the emotions of his hearers.

Unrest was in the air in 1848 all over Europe. On the fifteenth of March there came suddenly “the bloodless revolution.” Massed in front of the National Museum, the people heard Petöfi, who was standing on the steps, recite one of his poems. Even in a rough translation it is stirring.

Arise, O Hungarian! Your country calls.  
This is the time—now or never.

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Shall we be slaves or free?  
That is the question. Choose.

We swear by the God of the Magyars,  
We swear to be slaves no longer.

His hearers took up the cry, "Slaves no longer!" Then they were quiet while a famous novelist read the twelve demands of the Hungarians—freedom of the press, freedom for the serfs, religious freedom, the same taxes for all classes, the same laws for peasants and nobles, and so on—moderate these demands sound today.

They were laid before the king who accepted them all. This was a gigantic but temporary victory for Hungary. Afterward the constitution was not observed by Austria and the War for Freedom began. Raw recruits became a disciplined force under Klapka and Görgey and won a series of brilliant victories that, to the amazement of Europe, drove every enemy soldier from Hungarian soil. They proved to the world that Hungary could defend her constitution and her national existence.

In Debrecen which was for a while the center of the insurrection, I went to the Protestant Church where the Diet was meeting when it proclaimed the dethronement of the Habsburgs in Hungary. I saw the chair where Kossuth who had become Regent, sat on that April day. But he was not a great general and some critics blame

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him for ordering Görgey, pursuing the Austrians after a victory, to turn back and lay siege to Buda. This took precious weeks and gave Vienna time to make new plans. She appealed to Russia for help and with the coming of a quarter of a million of the czar's troops, the tide turned and Görgey surrendered—not to Austria, but to Russia. The last stronghold of the insurrection, Komarom, a fortress on the Danube, was forced to yield after a six weeks' siege.

The people were led to expect clemency. Instead the Austrians meted out punishments without mercy and the most cruel reprisals. The question of clemency was indeed put squarely before the new king and emperor, Francis Joseph, then eighteen years old. He followed his mother's advice and signed the death sentence of the thirteen Hungarian generals condemned by an illegal courtmartial, and on October sixth they were hung at Arad—a day of mourning observed every year in Hungary.

"What is this?" I stopped in a wide street intersection not far from Parliament and turned to Alicia, "this monument in the middle of traffic, with a red lamp always burning? I tried to puzzle out the inscription, but all I could read was the date, October 6, 1849."

"There used to be a huge building here in Liberty Square, barracks and prison combined. This is a monument for Count Batthyány, premier during the insur-

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rection—he was a prisoner here and was shot by the Austrians, the same day as the tragedy at Arad. Many patriots died here—every inch of ground was soaked with their blood. It was here the cruel Austrian governor, Haynau, had noble ladies stripped and whipped by his soldiers, to break their spirit.”

“Tell me more about Batthyány,” I begged.

“He was greatly beloved in Hungary. He was the man of the aristocracy, just as Kossuth was the man of the people. He stood for progress and world ideas. Very handsome he was, a great idealist, the idol of the day; and many women were in love with him—among others two Zichy countesses, sisters. One of them he married, the second sister married Count Karolyi, but never forgot her feeling for Batthyány.

“With the end of the War for Freedom, he was accused of high treason and was tried in an Austrian court. The judges were told to sentence him to death and at the last minute Francis Joseph would pardon him and so win a reputation for mercy. There are records—I don’t mean the official record of that court, but letters and diaries—telling what the judges thought and how horrified they were; for Batthyány was accused of things that never happened and wasn’t allowed to prove his innocence. There’s a special word for this in German—the literal translation is ‘assassinated by justice’—the process by which, with apparent legality, an inno-

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cent man is sentenced to death. This—in modern times.”

Alicia stopped with a break in her voice and we walked quite a long distance before she went on.

“The sixth of October when Batthyány and the generals were put to death, Countess Karolyi who’d never forgotten her love for her brother-in-law, cursed Francis Joseph and prayed that thirteen persons dearest and closest to him should die untimely and tragic deaths. This was much talked about and as one tragedy after another came to the relatives of Francis Joseph, people would keep count and say, ‘This makes seven,’ and then, ‘This is the eighth,’ and so on.”

“His brother was shot in Mexico—was that one?” I asked, thinking hard of what scanty details I knew of the Habsburgs.

“Yes, that was Archduke Maximilian. His wife tried to get help from the French, but failed; from the Pope, but failed. She went mad in Rome and died insane—many years later.”

“I know about the son Rudolf, whose death made Queen Elizabeth dress in mourning for the rest of her life. That was one of the thirteen?”

“Yes, and particularly tragic because Ru’olf was the only son, heir to the throne; and his dying was so needless—because of his love for a girl of sixteen.”

“And the others?”

“One nephew broke his neck in a fall from his horse

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A second died from a dum-dum bullet while he was out hunting. And a third, the most brilliant of the family, fell in love with an actress, but Francis Joseph refused his consent to the marriage; whereupon the young archduke abandoned the royal family, changed his name, married the actress and took passage for America. There was a great storm and the ship was never heard of more.

"The eldest child of Francis Joseph, Sophia, died through the carelessness of her nurse. His wife's sister was burned to death in a charity bazaar in Paris. His wife, our beloved Queen Elizabeth, was assassinated by an anarchist in Geneva.

"One of the archduchesses was poisoned. Another, forbidden to smoke, lighted a cigarette and hid it behind her back when her father came into the room. She was dressed for a court ball and her frock of white tulle caught fire. She ran out into the park—the worst thing she could have done—was terribly burned and died."

"That makes eleven."

"The last two came together, one June day in 1914, when a nephew, heir to the throne, and his wife were killed by a Serbian bomb. The curse of the countess was fulfilled. Terrible deaths they met, the whole thirteen."

After the failure of the War for Freedom Hungary was governed as a province of Austria and received a



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punishment so frightfully severe that she could do nothing. The leaders were in exile. The country was plunged into misery and poverty. It was a period of passive resistance not unlike the Gandhi campaigns in India. Hungary would cooperate in nothing. That state of affairs was bad for both sides and there came to be talk of a new arrangement.

Some say that only Austria's defeat in a war with Prussia made her willing to make any overtures to Hungary. Fresh soldiers were needed for the emperor's armies. Whispers of revolt in distant provinces made him decide to win Hungary's friendship. Be this as it may, the tact and perseverance of Francis Deák did bring about the Compromise of 1867.

"Your Majesty," Deák is reported to have said when the question of new troops for the imperial army came up, "it is the custom in Hungary that the women have only one child a year."

The two countries established a dual monarchy, the emperor of Austria to be also king of Hungary. The Hungarian constitution was restored, her independence reestablished. Finances, army and navy, diplomatic affairs were to be in common. In everything else Hungary governed herself.

In theory she had her full quota of army officers and of diplomats. In practice Austria took the lion's share. However Austria had pledged herself to pay two-thirds

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of the joint expenses and Hungary only one-third; but as the years passed Hungary became increasingly important while Austria paid the larger share of the bills. In literature and science and the arts they were equal. In 1914 the most influential man in the dual monarchy was Count Stephen Tisza, premier of Hungary.

The people had one grievance, however. It was tacitly understood, at the time of the Compromise, without being put into writing, that the court was to live in Hungary six months of the year. Francis Joseph didn't like this plan and preferred to spend his time in Vienna—and there was no possible way to force him to keep his side of the bargain.

What a difference it would have made had he come oftener and stayed longer! The whole social life of Budapest would have been revolutionized. Tradespeople of many sorts would have reaped a rich harvest. Many more aristocrats would have left their estates to spend weeks, months in the capital. Theatres and the opera would have had larger audiences. Hungary would have rejoiced.

But the king stayed in Vienna, coming only when it was obligatory—to open Parliament, for example; that he did in the throne room of the palace, merely standing there and declaring it open. Today when the Regent opens Parliament, he goes in person and does it with great ceremony; and Hungarians love ceremony more

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than any people I know—another touch of the East?

The royal palace in Buda, with its eight hundred and sixty-two rooms, seldom had a royal occupant, though Hungary taxed herself to enlarge and maintain it and paid Francis Joseph thirteen millions a year. It is easy to understand how people felt about this—their country treated like a stepchild.

After the Compromise came years of peace and a gradual prosperity. Eighteen ninety-six was an outstanding date, when Hungary celebrated the one thousandth anniversary of the coming of the Magyars under Árpád —“the first thousand years of our history,” Margit used to say to me proudly. An exposition was held, showing the resources of the land, her manufactured articles, her exports, her riches, her history. A great building campaign was carried out—the Millenium Monument at the entrance of the park in Budapest, museums, the palace of justice, the restoration of the Coronation Church and the fishermen’s bastion.

After these celebrations life went on peacefully for Hungary, broken once by threat of war with Serbia. It was serious enough for the army to be mobilized in 1908, but the difficulty was patched up for a time. Hungary knew, just as all Europe knew, that the Balkans were a danger spot. There was great unrest and dissatisfaction all through that part of the world. Then came July of 1914 and the war began.

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"Was there any debate in Hungary?" I asked many persons, "as to which side you'd fight on?"

One and all, they stared at me in utter amazement.

"Debate. Never one word. We'd pledged our loyalty to Austria. We would no more have considered going against her than we considered Napoleon's suggestion. Any debate as to which side we'd take? No. (On the contrary, Hungary went into the war with the greatest enthusiasm.

"But the war was not of our making," they explained to me over and over. "Of all the advisers of Francis Joseph, Count Tisza was the only one who urged that a milder ultimatum be sent to Serbia, demanding less and threatening less. He was the only one who urged that we should not declare war. When all the council voted against him he announced that Hungary entered on this war with no purpose of acquiring territory. So if it had ended differently, we'd have been no better off as to size."

Hungarians have always been great fighters. In this war they again proved themselves splendid soldiers. Their regiments were often sent to the most dangerous places. Victorious, they marched into two enemy capitals—Belgrade and Bucarest. They fought on three fronts where their courage and chivalry won deserved praise. They were the cleanest fighters in all the Central Powers.

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What a price Hungary paid, in money and in lives! Every little town and village has its war memorial with long, long lists of names—three hundred and forty here, over eight hundred there; only those soldiers who died during the war. In a Buda museum I saw tablets for various regiments of the Lost Territories; instead of officers' names, long lists of battles; some in red letters to show where the regiment had met enormous losses. Yes, Hungary paid her share and more.

In money too. Many times I heard a man say, not boasting but merely stating a fact, "We can't afford this or that. We used to be very rich. My wife too had a fortune. But hers and mine were both invested in Austrian securities and in various war loans—worth today so much waste paper; for while Austria paid a small percentage of her obligations to Austrian holders, she would pay nothing to Hungarians."

Four long years and more of the war, broken only by the death of Francis Joseph and the coronation of Charles IV and Zita at the end of 1916. Long years of the war when supplies grew less and less and sacrifices of every kind were demanded from the people behind the lines. Then suddenly the downfall of the Austrian empire and in Hungary a republic was proclaimed from the steps of Parliament; that was in November of 1918.

Scarcely anyone thought this republic, with Count

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Michael Karolyi as president, would endure. Many were surprised that it lasted till March. But worse was to come. Karolyi's government fell. His last act was to release some noted Communists from prison and give the power over to them.

Then began in Hungary the Bolshevik regime—a bloody reign of terror for more than four months. I had read Cécile Tormay's diary of those tragic weeks. The stories I heard first-hand reminded me constantly of how the French aristocrats suffered during their Reign of Terror.

Whenever I crossed the Chain Bridge, I looked at the tablet on one of the piers, in memory of two Hungarians, father and son, who were denounced to the Bolsheviks by the wife of their janitor, taken out on the bridge at midnight, bound together and tossed into the Danube.

"Janitors were spies," one woman told me, "and earned much money for reporting on the people in their buildings. Our man's son wanted to get married and I was able to get two gold rings for him; after that they were devoted to me. Once I was warned to leave Budapest; I went some kilometers away to an Englishman's estate; that night the Bolsheviks went to our apartment house asking for me. The janitor said truthfully that he didn't know where I was, and shunted them off to somebody else.

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"We lived from day to day, always in terror. We never knew what would come next. When the Bolshevik rule ended, there was found a long list of names—almost every important person in Budapest was on that list. The day for the massacre was set—a fortnight later. We just escaped a second St. Bartholomew's."

In a reception room in the House of Parliament I had a long talk with a Hungarian who'd been arrested by Bela Kun in that very building, and kept a prisoner, first in the cellar, later in the restaurant. Sixty-four Hungarians lived in that one room. Their only recreation was playing chess.

"Here," he protested when his opponent played wildly, "keep your mind on the game!"

"I can't think about chess. You will be freed, but I—I feel it, I shan't live through this."

"But, man, you don't think this will last?"

"I shan't see the end of it," he said again.

Nor did he. With three friends he was shot by the Bolsheviks. The chess-player was freed. At the door of Parliament he found his wife waiting for him. In silence they walked up the street. When they reached their home, he heard an inner voice saying, "Up to this day you've been a carefree fellow. Now your life has been saved and you are free—but no longer to enjoy yourself, you are free to serve Hungary."

Ever since he's been working sixteen hours a day.

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When I heard later all that he does—chairman of this and member of that, president of the other society, plus constant speaking and writing, to say nothing of his serving in Parliament—I wondered how he could crowd so much into sixteen hours.

Going for tea in a lovely garden far off in the Buda hills, I caught an echo of those tragic months when the world was too busy to pay much attention to what was going on in Hungary. At dusk a sudden shower drove us in. I stood in the shadow by the door, holding cushions and tray, unable to see my way to a chair, while my hostess pulled all the curtains in two rooms and in the entrance hall. Then and not till then did she snap on the lights.

"Why didn't you turn on the electricity first?" I asked curiously.

"That's a remnant of the Bolshevik months—this many years after. I learned then never to turn on a light till we were completely hidden from view. We never knew when spies were about. Oh, you can't know what it meant to live through those terrible days, just after all the misery of the war."

Children too were impressed by that period and have not forgotten. Here's one story I heard, typical of many:

"I was a little girl of twelve, a pupil in a private school. Of course the school was taken over by the



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Bolshevists—the director had been a helper in a cobbler's shop. All the lessons were utterly changed. We spent an enormous amount of time on communistic doctrines. There was a textbook on sex and free love, horribly presented, with the most dreadful pictures—for children of twelve!"

Agota shook her head and shut her eyes as if she'd like to wipe out that memory.

"We had to sing the *Internationale* frequently. Sometimes, for we were but children, we'd play a trick on the teacher. If Alicia didn't know her lesson, I'd stand up and start singing that communistic hymn and the teacher'd say, 'Let us all go into the free air and sing it,' and the unprepared lesson would escape notice.

"I remember too the food we had. For almost four months we lived on barley and fish from Russia. Sometimes the fish was merely dried, not smoked. Our mother tried to vary it a little—one day barley with cheese, the next day with something else. Occasionally a notice was posted, saying cakes would be sold on Friday. I stood in line from eight to ten, then my brother for two hours and my mother for one; my turn again from one to three, when for much money I bought a tiny package of plain cakes—oh, how good they tasted!"

Just once did I hear a different kind of story.

"Before the war—some years before—we lived in Upper Hungary. My mother found a lad of ten crying

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on the street; his parents had died and he was on his way to the orphanage, but didn't want to go there. My mother brought him home and he did odd chores about the house and garden and went to school. Later she sent him to a chauffeur's school in Budapest and got him a job.

"Under the Bolsheviks he was secretary of a ministry—many of their high officials had no more training than that—and my mother asked him to live in our villa in Buda, as a protection to us. He took two rooms and never came into ours. He told everybody it was his house, though actually he paid us a little rent.

"Two of the Hungarian nobles who were leaders in the movement against the Bolsheviks stayed with us for some time. A sudden warning made them leave at night. At three in the morning soldiers broke in the door of the villa and rushed into our bedroom, demanding that my mother hand over the two men. She threw a dressing-gown around her shoulders and stood up, saying quietly, 'There is no one here.'

"Sleepy, wide-eyed, I sat up in bed. One soldier thrust his bayonet through the blankets, to make sure no one was hidden in the bed—I remember pulling my feet up just in the nick of time. They insisted the two men were somewhere in the house and at last went into the rooms of our lodger. He wakened, called them dreadful names—dirty dogs was the mildest term he used—

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and ordered them out of his house. Thanks to him, we were safe."

"It's like bread cast on the waters—your mother's kindness to that orphan boy, repaid in a strange fashion. Do go on and tell me more."

"In August the Roumanians entered Budapest, sent by the Allies to drive out the Communists. They marched in very slowly, as if on parade, their general on a white horse. The Bolsheviks disappeared—just melted away. Many of them had evidently had warning and had fled to Russia. Meanwhile the Hungarians had been assembling their forces near Szeged and they too marched slowly into Budapest, headed by Admiral Horthy on a white horse—and the Roumanians disappeared."

"But where were your Hungarian regiments all this time? Surely the end of the war must have left you with plenty of trained soldiers."

"Those who returned from the Russian front had to pass through the Czech lines and were disarmed. Many of our men were in Italy, kept there for more than a year through a misunderstanding of the armistice terms—or perhaps it's more just to say, two ways of interpreting those terms; using their own interpretation the Italians claimed our men were prisoners of war."

"It wasn't the soldiers but the women of Hungary who took the first steps to rally the paralyzed powers of the country and make plans to drive out the Bolshe-

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vists. Encouraged by the example of what is now the League of Hungarian Women, the men began organizing too and some regiments were assembled in the south. When in November—1919—they entered Budapest Hungary came into her own again.

"The Roumanians looted before they left—horses and cattle, railroad equipment, supplies of all kinds, valuable machinery, collections from museums. A hundred thousand telephones from Budapest was one item in their loot. Friends have told me of seeing in the streets of Bucarest their own fine carriage horses and harness with their coat of arms. There was never an accounting for all that plunder. Hungary was never credited with one *pengo*."

Meanwhile the Peace Conference had assembled at Paris and was discussing indemnities and drawing new frontiers on the map of Europe. Hungary too sent her representatives to this international meeting, fortified with documents and maps, with all kinds of statistics and information. It sounds scarcely credible in the twentieth century, but they were shut away by themselves and never once consulted as to the details of the treaty, but were simply told, "Sign here."

Hungary protested, "This is unjust, I will not sign."

"What?" replied the Allies. "Well, you will. Sign—or we'll declare an economic blockade and starve you into submission."

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As a last resort Count Apponyi, "the grand old man of Hungary," pleaded for a plebiscite. One was granted—at Sopron; so overwhelming was the vote for Hungary that other plebiscites were sternly refused.

There were further protests. The president of France promised in writing that if in the future certain details of the new frontiers proved to be unjust, they would be revised. At last, with a formal protest, Hungary accepted the treaty of Trianon and thereby signed away seventy-two percent of her territory and twelve million of her subjects.

That treaty was signed on the fourth of July, 1920, the date that means so much to us become a tragic date for Hungary. But our Senate, at the suggestion of Secretary of State Lansing, made an indirect protest also when they said, "This is not just. Why punish Hungary more than Austria? more than Germany? We refuse to accept such a treaty. We will not be a party to it. We'll make our own peace with Hungary." And they did.

The Allies insisted too that Charles IV should abdicate, and when he refused, that he should leave Hungary. They threatened an economic blockade and he went away. In the spring of 1921 he made an attempt to regain the throne, told by his adherents that the people longed for him and that France would recognize a *coup d'état*. Whether or no the Hungarians yearned for their king

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it's hard to say; as to France, the statement was wholly false. A sharp message to Budapest from the Council of Ambassadors. At the request of his friends Charles IV left the country.

In October he tried once more, returning by airplane. The premier asked him to abdicate. When he refused he was arrested, interned in the abbey of Tihany by Lake Balaton, and sent on a British gunboat to the Madeira Islands where he died the following year.

Today Hungary is a kingdom without a king. The Regent, Admiral Horthy, is at the head of the government. There is a party that calls Otto, oldest son of Charles IV and Zita, heir to the throne. They argue that his father never abdicated, but yielded to threats; and that the promise that no Habsburg should rule in Hungary need not hold good forever.

But every one agrees that the question of a king is today not a burning question. It's far more important for the country, deprived of so much of her territory, of her raw materials, of her resources—coal and salt and gold mines, forests, factories—to get on her feet financially, economically, educationally; and this is a task calling for the best endeavors of every Hungarian. It is the task to which they are devoting all their energies.

"Since the treaty of Trianon," Gizella summed it up tersely, "we're just holding on. There was a flicker of false prosperity in 1929. Every year taxes go up and

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up, in an effort to keep the budget balanced. Every year our people grow poorer and poorer. But—we still hold on. For more than a thousand years we've lived here in the land of the three mountains and the four rivers. Invasions have come and gone, with frightful loss of life and destruction. Our history has been marked by great ups and downs. But Hungary has endured. We will live through this also."

"Yes," agreed an Englishman who has lived many years in Hungary and has had unusual opportunities to study the people, "I must remind you of the enormous rallying power of the Hungarians. In an emergency all their best comes to the surface. Their spirit rises with defeat. Proud and high-spirited, they meet misfortunes boldly and refuse to resign themselves to their present fate.

"I often think they're like steel, tempered by the fires of adversity and toughened by its blows. Out of despair they make a stepping-stone. Underneath everything they have a certain resilience and a reserve of vitality that enable them to endure."

In the next room some one turned on the radio. The Budapest station. Very clearly I heard the chords sounding, the strain of music set to the words of Count Széchenyi, "For my part, I like to think that Hungary shall be!"

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